THE
EMPIRE

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OF CANADA

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Addresses
2018–2019

volume
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THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA

2018-2019

115th Yearbook

Volume 2 of 2

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
Queen of Canada
wearing Her Canadian insignia
as Sovereign of the Order of Canada
and the Order of Military Merit

THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA

Founded 1903

Addresses
2018–2019

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

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Kent Emerson
President, 2018-2019

THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

I am incredibly proud to have served as the 115th President of The Empire Club of Canada.

The Empire Club of Canada is proud of its rich history and legacy. As President, my vision was to modernize and continue to demonstrate the Club's continued relevancy as one of Canada's top thought-leadership forums.

The work undertaken over the course of the 115th season helped us succeed in elevating the conversations that matter to Canadians, by tackling new topics with a wide range of fascinating speakers. Our very successful 39-event season reinforced that despite an ever-growing number of platforms for communicating or debating important issues of the day, Canada's experts and leaders trust our podium and ability to connect people through dialogue.

From an anti-hate event which contemplated the rise of white supremacy, to an event on the role of big data in sports with the General Managers of the Toronto Raptors and Toronto Maple Leafs, to a discussion between a renowned historian and a well-known Canadian broadcaster on how our national identity is shaped by historical interpretations, there was tremendous breadth in the issues our speakers tackled. I am honoured to have been responsible for bringing those conversations to Canadians. And I am equally as proud to have been part of the evolution of the Empire Club of Canada and its modernization.

The club's successes during the 115th season were due in large part to an incredible board of directors who I believe work harder than any other board. I'd like to extend a special thanks to Antoinette Tummillo, Ziggy Krupa, Kelly Jackson, Jenna Donelson and Past President Gordon McIvor for going above and beyond what was required.

It's also fair to express my appreciation to Past President Noble Chummar for roping-me-in (years ago) to join the board of directors so that this opportunity to lead was possible. Congratulations to Jehan Karsan, Bill Roberton and The Empire Club team for their providing incredible service and support to the club.

More than anything I was able to take on this role because of the incredible amount of support and advice from my wife Emily. I am so grateful to have her in my corner.

Hearing them in person, I found the following discussions to be interesting, timely and, in some moments, truly inspiring. As you engage with them, I hope you will too.

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The Empire Club Presents

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SARADA PERI,
FORMER SENIOR SPEECHWRITER FOR
PRESIDENT OBAMA,

WITH POLITICAL STRATEGIST
DON GUY

ON: THE CHANGING NATURE OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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January 28, 2019

Sarada is in town, today, visiting as a Ryerson Global Fellow from the Ryerson Leadership Lab, an action-oriented think tank aimed at addressing today's most pressing civic challenges. Thanks to Ryerson for your help in helping us organize today's event. We also have Karim Bardeesy here from Ryerson and a number of students.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Don Guy, Pollster and Strategist, Pollara Strategic Insights;
Founding Member; KTG Public Affairs

Ms. Sarada Peri, Speechwriter and Communications Strategist; Former Special Assistant and Senior Speechwriter for Former President Barack Obama

Can you stand up, the students from Ryerson who are here? That would be great. This evening's topic is "The Changing Nature of Political Communications." When I think about the changing nature of political communications and the role that this speaker has had with former President Obama, I cannot stop thinking how much things have changed in the last few years and how the environment has changed since working for President Obama.

A few weeks ago, I was sitting around watching the funeral of George Bush, Sr., and all of a sudden when I saw George W. Bush, I blurted out, "Oh, my God, I miss that guy." My wife started going, "Are you crazy? Did you just say that?" I answered, "Yes, I said that. I did not even know I thought it." I think one of the things for all of us who have been watching what is going down in the U.S. is we see that things have changed so much. The differences between Presidents Clinton and Bush, which at the time we thought were monumental differences, in retrospect, seem to be very small differences in comparison with the differences between President Obama and the current president.

Some of those changes include historic changes to global alliances, as when you have a president calling Vladimir Putin his best friend, or when you have a deliberate polarization of the general public in ways we could not have imagined. And, now, we have an increasing acceptance of nationalism and mainstream conversations about white supremacy that you would not have imagined before.

Perhaps the most alarming trend is this erosion of fact-based discussions and an increased ambiguity around what is truth. Senator Moynihan once said, "Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not their own facts." Right now, that seems to be up for debate. That has always been a problem in politics to some degree. We all know Bill Clinton had his moment about "It depends on what the definition of 'is', is." Since then, in the Clinton example, it was clear public outrage. I think we are in a territory where it is not clear whether lying or misrepresenting facts causes any outrage or any real consequences. That is something that I hope the speakers will get into today. We have 4,000 false claims that the current president has made, according to the Toronto Star, in over 720 days into a presidency.

This new political environment that today's speaker is navigating is not an easy feat. While we have not experienced anything close to that in Ontario in political communications, we have had the example of Ontario Proud playing a significant role in our recent election. For all these reasons, we wanted to do this event, tonight. We are really lucky to have Sarada, and we are so glad you are here.

I think this event sold out so quickly, because of just the times we are living in and how interesting it is. With that, I am going to start the introduction.To lead tonight's discussion with our feature speaker, we have Don Guy. Everyone knows what Don has been up to. Today, he has been described as a "legendary political strategist," a "brilliant strategy and a policy wizard" with a unique understanding of the nexus between communications and policy. However, if you ask Don exactly how many electoral victories he has been responsible for, he says things like, "I don't know; these things are team efforts; a lot of people deserve the credit."

Everyone knows his reputation of coming back from third place victories, second place victories to win elections all across Canada. He has recently returned to Pollara, but now is Owner and Chief Strategist. He is a founding partner of KTG Public Affairs and is a member of global research and strategy firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research.

He has provided the research and strategies that have fueled some of the most successful public affairs campaigns in Canada. Don is a treasurer of the InterAction Council of

Former Heads of State and Government, an international NGO think tank. Don's graduate academic training was at the University of Toronto, where he took his MBA and doctoral studies in political and democratic behaviour.

Please, welcome to the stage, the pollster, strategist, and man of international mystery, Don Guy. Finally, tonight's feature speaker is a speechwriter and communications strategist who has helped top leaders and thinkers.

From Fortune 50 CEOs to the president of the United States, she inspires and persuades audiences.

She was Special Assistant to the president and Senior Speechwriter for President Barack Obama. Prior to joining the White House, she was a principal at West Wing Writers, where she worked with corporate, political and non-profit clients on speechwriting, speech delivery, op-eds, books, and message strategy. She was also a member of the 2012 and 2016 Democratic National Convention speechwriting teams. A recovering policy wonk, Sarada worked on Capitol Hill as Lead Education and Healthcare Policy Advisor to former Senator Mary Landrieu. She started her career as a high school English teacher in New Orleans through Teach for America. Sarada graduated from Tufts University and holds a master's degree in public policy from Harvard's Kennedy School. Please, put your hands together for Speechwriter and Communications Strategist, Sarada Peri.

Ms. Sarada Peri with Mr. Don Guy

DG: First of all, let me just say thank you, Kent, for the introduction and the fantastic opportunity to be here and spend some time chatting with Sarada, whose work I admire tremendously. There are so many familiar faces in the crowd. I think we will be well treated.

You never know. I know of at least one individual who brought hard dinner rolls to throw if he did not like what he heard. I just want to take a personal moment to say so many of you here are responsible for the successes that I have been attributed credit for. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your hard work. Another way of thinking about this event is old and busted meets young and fresh. As a result, I would imagine many of you are familiar with Sarada's work, but perhaps not some of what she is really all about, so I thought we would start with a short snap-around, a two-minute snap-around of questions that would help you get to know her a bit before we dive into the meat of the subject. Apologies to any vegans or vegetarians for the use of that metaphor.

Let us start with a tough one, Sarada. Who is your favourite president?

SP: Other than the one I worked for?

DG: Could be the one you worked for.

SP: I feel like I cannot say him, because then you will all think I am biased; although, he is in my ***[list of]*** top presidents. I would say my two favourite presidents are two of the favourite presidents of most Americans or many Americans: Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

DG: Excellent. What was your favourite moment working for the president that you worked for?

SP: There were so many.

Most of my day involved staring at a blank Word document in a sea of self-loathing. I think one of my favourite days—and this is a strange day to say it was a 'favourite day', as some of you all may know that in 2015, in Charleston, South Carolina, a white supremacist walked into a church and murdered nine Black churchgoers. It was a horrific day. It was a really tough moment in our country. On the day that the president was scheduled to give the eulogy down in Charleston, which turned out to be one of his finest speeches, that I had nothing to do with, by the way, was also the day that the Supreme Court ruled in favour of same-sex marriage equality. I did get to work on that speech.

I actually had written multiple versions, because we did not know how the court was going to rule.

I remember that morning, my boss, Cody, had been working on the Charleston eulogy all night long with the president, and I had been working on these multiple drafts. Suddenly, the decision came down and my colleague next door to me emailed me and just said in all caps, “TOTAL VICTORY.” It was this strange day where suddenly we are in motion. The president went to the Rose Garden and delivered the victory speech that we had worked on. It was such a moment for our country. Then, he immediately got in the helicopter, went to Andrews Air Force Base, flew to Charleston and gave, I think, one of the greatest eulogies that has been given. That night, a team at the White House had planned that the whole White House would be lit up in rainbow colours in honour of the decision. It was just one of these days when I felt like somehow this president, despite everything we had been through, brought the country together. I had very little to do with that day, but I felt like, as an American, I was just proud of that day.

DG: I think many of us felt the same. Who is your least favourite president?

SP: Oh, I think you all can guess.

DG: What is your least favourite moment in this individual’s presidency? I think it is safe, I can say ‘his’ presidency, given the track record.

SP: Yes. It is hard to choose, guys. It is hard to choose, but I will say the one moment—and it is still actually going on—that I felt like this person is "apatriotic," as in unpatriotic, as it is not even in his mind, and he has no moral compass, was the day we learned that his administration had been separating, had been kidnapping people's children, people who had been coming over to seek asylum at the border and putting them in cages. If you see the term 'toddler jails' in a newspaper in your country, you know something is deeply wrong, that we have gone astray. I think that was—as an American, as a mom, as a human being with any sense of morality—such a devastating thing to learn, and it makes you feel so helpless in your own country.

DG: Let us start at the top of the funnel in terms of the topic of the evolution of political communications and work our way down. I guess the question that I think is on many people's minds who have either practiced the craft or have not is what the heck is going on? What is going on in the world?

SP: Hell, if I know. I think, from a political communications standpoint, the fundamentals are kind of still there. Donald Trump broke a lot of norms. He basically violated everything that people in our profession would say what not to do when they are running for president, making him disqualifying. In some ways, he was so unpresidential as to make him president.

He ran through all these norms. There are a lot of reasons he won. What is interesting is that while doubling down on his views, showing zero empathy for anybody who is not loyal to him sort of at a personal level and really just stoking the fears of his base keeps them loyal to him. Because they keep him in power, that keeps the Republican establishment loyal to him, which has been disturbing, I think, to people who thought that the Republican Party had more integrity than that. If you look at the country, at large, he is extremely unpopular. He has the lowest approval rating of any president since polling started, basically, nationally. People do not like how he communicates.

Most people think that he has something to do with Russian collusion in our election. Most people think—and it is true—he lies constantly. Nobody thinks that this is somebody who communicates in a way that is honest, but I think that what he did do was bring to the forefront the now overused term 'authenticity'.

He was himself. He is authentically a racist, but he is authentic. I think that did actually work for people who were sick of people like me and Don consulting the heck out of candidates. What I think you are seeing now that is really interesting is that now other people are doing that, but in ways that are honest and have integrity, and they are reaching new audiences. If you look at the rise of many of the Democrats who won in our 2018 mid-terms—we just had mid-terms—and the

Democrats won back the House, and you see some of the people who did really well, and I will use Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the Congresswoman from New York, as an example. She is a truly skilled, gifted, authentic communicator. She knows how to reach her constituents and young people all across the country using social media. She is very much herself. I think just today, she tweeted something related to both skincare and the 70% marginal tax on wealthy people. It is really impressive. Really impressive stuff.

What she is also doing really well is opening up the process of what happens in Congress to people. She will come home from her workday and then she will do an Instagram story explaining how Congress works, which is remarkable, and I think is really appealing to people.

Yes, what Trump did was break the whole system, and he is trying to burn our country down. The flipside is I think we are seeing good people, people who are true public servants, and who take that and go in a better direction and communicate really authentically, which is actually exciting. If there is any silver lining, maybe that is it. I do not know.

DG: What would you see—I mean, AOC is a great example. Is she sort of the counter, both in terms of use of the tools, but also in approach and authenticity, to that Trump phenomena, that communications and brand phenomena?

SP: Maybe, except—and this is maybe not answering your question—going back to your previous question, of course, we are all in our own media echo chambers, so now our new cycle, as you all know very well has been diced and sliced and bisected into a million different filters. You can listen to news that comes only from outlets whose opinion you share. Those outlets will double down on their views. People are living in those echo chambers. Fox News is doing a lot to trash her, and they are succeeding with their own base. That is still a problem. I think that what has shifted is that what we are thinking about for 2020 is whether someone like Obama, who had a message of universal values and one of hope and change and unifying the country, could win anymore. I do not know. I think that is what is scary: Whether that even resonates anymore or whether we are all—and I am sure you guys feel this here—so, so locked in our own little bubbles and so hunkered down that we cannot even get past that, and the idea of coming together is almost anathema.

DG: That begs the question. One of the things that I think has happened with the media atomization is the economics of political communications have fundamentally shifted the same way that they have with media. You question whether the economics of persuasion makes sense anymore compared to the economics of polarization.

What is your sense of that? Is there a way out of that, or is the model permanently broken?

SP: I hope not. I still think that people do not necessarily enjoy being polarized. Yes, there is something nice about finding community in other people who hate Donald Trump, but I think there is a reason so many people gravitated to Barack Obama. I do think people still want hope more than they want fear. I take some solace in that. Where I think the changing economics of political communications is going to be interesting is that—so I do not know how it works here—I think there is probably a lot more money in politics in America, but the big dollars in politics, in political communications is in media buys, television ads. That is not really how people consume information anymore. There is going to be a really interesting struggle between digital media and TV and how you communicate authentically to the different audiences, different demographics, different ages. That, I think, could actually change the system, fundamentally. The other thing I want to say about that is if you look at the people who succeeded in 2018, they invariably were not talking about Trump. They were not doing negative attacks on the president. They really were offering an affirmative vision for the people they hoped to represent. Those are the people who won. That was kind of the strategy for the Democrats at a national level, but also what was going on in district races. Again, maybe that means that polarization is not necessarily always a winning formula. Again, if you look at how unpopular Trump is, he has done it really well with his base.

They are going to stick with him. They are loyal to a fault. Beyond that, he has lost independence in pretty meaningful numbers.

DG: From the time you started, let us say the time you wrote your first speech and today, how has the work, the task of getting a message out changed, in your mind and the organization of delivering a message?

SP: I think all the principles of messaging that you and I tell people we work with are the same. What is the one thing you are trying to convey? What is the story that helps you tell it? How do you connect your values to your audience's values? How do you figure out what moves them, what persuades them? All those things are still the same. In some ways, though, there are more opportunities to disseminate that message and ways to maybe reach people you would not normally reach. If you think about speeches from back in the day, they were very long, because people had travelled from a long way to hear them. You were shouting because there were no microphones. Oratory was a really different thing.

All of that has evolved to fit where we are today. I think what I have found in my time at the White House—I was there during the second term—was that they had already figured that out, and they were starting to find new ways to disseminate messages that were not in the form of traditional speeches. As the speechwriters, we loved that, because that meant that we could write fewer speeches, so that is great. If you are trying to get a bunch of young people to sign up for health care, you are not going to go and deliver a speech at the Chamber of Commerce.

You are going to do a Between Two Ferns video; you are going to do a BuzzFeed video; you are going to go on Snap and do a story, whatever that is. You are going to reach them where they are. I think the opportunities for that were exciting for us. All of that comes with a—there is always a dark side to all of this. That, I think, is interesting.

DG: I am glad you mentioned Between Two Ferns because it is actually one of my favourite communications moments from President Obama. I do want to point out, Kent, that in my rider, my contract rider, there was supposed to be ferns on either side of us. I am willing to let it pass this time.

KE: We can still do it in cactuses.

DG: You mentioned something earlier I want to come back to which is candidates who come to people like us or others in the room and say, "Teach me to be authentic." When that happens, whether it is a CEO or a candidate for political office or whatever the case may be, what do you tell them?

SP: I sigh deeply. Obviously, you and I both know that if someone is coming to you and asking you that question, they have not done the hard work of figuring out why they want to be in public life or be a leader. It is always turning the question back. I spend a lot of time when I work with people sort of interviewing them, just trying to figure out what makes them tick. You have to be able to answer the why. This is what I was saying earlier about this kind of overused term 'authenticity'.

I blame Trump for this, and people seeking something, some magic sauce, but it really is about getting them to do the internal work and doing the inquiry to figure out why they want to be doing the thing that they are seeking and that is hard. You can always tell when people are not ready for it. You can always tell a politician who is not quite ready for prime time. It is not that they are not polished; it is that they have not done the internal work.

DG: I have always found it a challenge because part of my answer is you have to have the courage to be yourself. You have to have the courage to open up and be judged for good or for bad. I was speaking with somebody who was thinking about running, earlier today, who is fantastic and very authentic. Her family were saying to her, "I am not sure you should do this because of how awful the climate is right now and the kinds of attacks and lies and unfair things that you will be subjected to." Probably fair to say regardless of which side of the partisan aisle you are entering on. What do you say to those folks?

SP: I think you brought up an interesting point, because you said 'she'. I think that the authenticity piece is a lot more fraught for women candidate leaders because the double standards are through the roof, as we all know.

I hear a lot of people, for example, talk about how Bernie Sanders could have beat Donald Trump. I will spare you my views on this.

DG: Please, do not.

SP: Bernie was so authentic. Why could not Hillary be more authentic? Does anybody really think, really, that a female candidate in her sixties could get up somewhere, yelling, with her hair undone, flying everywhere, talking about a revolution and anyone was going to vote her for dogcatcher? What nonsense.

Of course, a woman could not do that. It is preposterous. That double standard, I think, has hindered women candidates for so long, because there, I mean, every time I work with a woman candidate, she is wondering, "Is my voice too high? Am I wearing the right clothes? How can I sound?" All of that, I think, ends up making women candidates seem inauthentic.

It is only because they are trying to suppress their real selves, because the patriarchy has told them, "We do not want your real selves. Your real self is not a leader, and we are not going to vote for you."

Again, what I think is exciting about this most recent crop of winners in America is, at least, they really broke some new boundaries on political communication for women. Some of these political ads, even from people who did not win, were so exciting and different. MJ Hegar, who ran for Congress in Texas, was a combat vet, and she put out some really bold ads.

She was not the only one. I think, hopefully, this is a moment where women are just done putting up with this. I do not know if that means we will ever elect a female president, but I think this was a good moment to push back on that. For so long—and I am sure there are lots of women in this room that know this—it has just been a real, huge hindrance.

DG: I think that is exactly where her family was coming from, which is that you are going to be subjected to something that others and probably your opponent, who is a man, is not going to be subjected to.

SP: Exactly. Yes, and President Obama was really clear-eyed about this. He once said about Secretary Clinton when they were running against each other in the primary, years later when he talked about it: "Like Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. She had to do everything I did, but backwards and in high heels. She had to show up four hours before a debate, because they made her do hair and makeup." No one made him do that.

Those things pile on. I think President Obama was clear-eyed about that later on.

DG: In terms of the mix of tools that you are using today, what would you say is the most important tool or platform that you are using and recommending to your clients?

SP: What do you mean, 'tool' or 'platform'?

DG: Is it Twitter? Is it Instagram? Et cetera.

SP: Oh, I see.

DG: Really, what I am trying to get at, to follow up, is what does the future look like from what you are seeing?

The U.S. is the innovator in political communications, which is why we all watch it so closely. We cannot afford most of those things that you do, but it is the innovator. I think people here, in the room, and people watching online would love to hear your sense of what is next, what is the next big platform or evolution.

SP: I do not know what the next big platform is. As a speechwriter, I am actually kind of a luddite and have been blown away myself by what is out there. I do think that people want to get closer to their candidates.

They do not want to feel like they are these distant representatives who I know nothing about. I do think we are going to see more of Instagram stories where people are cooking and talking about their day to their constituents. I do not know what that is going to mean, but those barriers are really breaking down, especially, with young people who feel like they want to know everything about the process. No more smoke-filled back rooms where things are going on. Put it all on camera. Show it to me live, in living colour. That is going to be really interesting. I am worried about Twitter and sort of the really toxic online environment, especially, for women and candidates of colour and what all that means. At the same time, I think there are tons of opportunity there. Who knows what the future is going to be? Is it going to be that candidates are inviting you into their virtual reality room where you can imagine what it is like if they are in office? I have no idea, but I do think that the fundamentals remain the same, which is that people want authentic leaders who respect them and who are transparent.

That is going to be the ballgame, whatever the platform is. I do think it is going to be insanely expensive, whatever it is, until Americans get money out of our politics. I do not know when that is going to happen.

DG: I think part of the antidote, potentially, because we are seeing some of the very same phenomena here, are the doors. Go back to the doors. Now, running a presidential campaign, that is, obviously, not feasible, but I would imagine that a number of the candidates who had success in the House races and some of the State races must have spent some time at doors connecting with people authentically.

SP: That is the whole ballgame. It always has been. Retail politics are still the most important thing. There were reports coming out of Iowa about how Elizabeth Warren is doing really well there, just knocking on doors and having conversations with people. I am just using her as an example, but that is still the ballgame.

That is how Barack Obama won the Iowa caucuses, which catapulted him and made the whole campaign possible. It is still everything. However, everything still costs money, and it is an arms race. Every year, our presidential campaigns, in particular, get more and more expensive. Until we get rid of the kind of dark, hidden, corporate money that goes into—who knows where it is coming from? The incentives are just going to be totally misaligned. Yes, I do think, going back to the point about sort of transparency and wanting to see what you are doing, that stuff still matters, especially, in the early states. Our early primary states and caucuses—Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina—pride themselves on getting to know those candidates.

DG: Very much. I think I see a couple of people in the room who actually went down and stumped for President Obama, Senator Obama at the time, in Iowa and in New Hampshire. He was so exciting to so many people north of the border that a ton of our peers and colleagues went and did that and a lot of them consider it the most rewarding experience of their political careers because of how it was received. We have got a federal election coming up here.

SP: Yes, I heard.

DG: You may have been involved over the weekend—discussions with that.

SP: Do not screw it up.

DG: There are some people from different perspectives in the room, I want to point out. This is a multi-faith.

We have blue; we have red; we have orange; we have, I think, one or two greens. What is your advice for these folks as they lay track for an October federal election?

SP: I think you and I have kind of just talked about some of the essentials. Know who you are and why you are doing it. Tell and offer an affirmative vision. Do not just crap on the other guy. You really have to present an alternative, if you are trying to unseat someone. If you try to hold power, you need to pain a vision for why, if we stay on this path, it is going to get better. I think back to what we did in 2012 for President Obama, and it was very much post-economic recession.

The economy was getting better, but people were not feeling it yet. That whole campaign was about forward motion. We are going to keep going.

If you stick with us, you will feel it. You have to give something for people to hang on to, something to believe in. I think probably more than ever people are hungry for that, because there is a lot of fear circulating in the air, and it is not pleasant. That is not actually what excites people. Make sure your young people vote. Do not let them sit home.

Questions & Answers

DG: Are you okay if we take some questions from the audience?

SP: I am happy to do whatever you want me to do. Yes.

DG: Why don't we do that, open up for questions from the audience. Then, I do have one last question that I will save until the very end.

Q: Thank you for coming. Is Michelle going to run and clean house?

SP: I do not know her, but I have read her book. I am sure some of you have, too. She has been crystal clear that she will never run for public office. I take her at her word. I suspect that she would find it very unpleasant, but do not we all wish.

Q: **This has been a great dialogue. My one question would be about what characteristics could you see a woman having to win in the White House? What characteristics would it be, unlike those of Hillary Clinton, that would make them be successful?**

SP: This is a very hard question. I was going to say that she is a man. I hate to say this about my country, but I just do not trust us right now. I was so heartbroken the last time. You put up the most qualified person to run for president since John Quincy Adams and you vote for the buffoon. Granted, there were a lot of reasons for that in Russia and Facebook. There were a lot of reasons why it was razor-thin and our dumb electoral college. She won the popular vote by three million votes. You can tell I still have a chip on my shoulder about this whole thing, so I will stop there. I think one good thing that is happening right now is that already what four women have declared, so, in some senses, there is a neutralizing of the issue that is going on.

You are also seeing when the press covers these women candidates in the way they historically have, which is rife with double standards and in a really sexist manner, people are really calling them out on it.

There is a truly sort of robust kind of feminist-leaning media that has the vocabulary to call them out in a way that I think people were almost afraid to do with Hillary, because we did not want to make the election about gender, necessarily. She did, but not as much and certainly in 2008.

That, I think, is helpful. I think, again, just woman or man, somebody who is ready to present themselves as their best self and is transparent and honest and has a vision that people want to be a part of, has the power to build a movement because, again, that is what Obama did really successfully. I think we are hungry for that again.

What is really interesting right now—I am sure you have been hearing this a lot—is that, in terms of Democrats, everybody is getting up in a tizzy about who is sort of most electable. Everybody is saying whoever can win. Whoever that person is, let us put that person up. There is a lot of debate about who that person could be, man, woman, whatever. I think we are just getting into our own heads a little bit, and this is how we snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, which we do well. I am a little concerned that we are overthinking it right now, and we have to let this primary process play out. It is going to be a bloody, many-person primary, and I think we just need to calm down a little bit as Democrats. We are kind of freaking out.

Q: Good evening. Thank you very much for your comments, tonight. I am fascinated as a political writer with your comments about truth. Can you comment a little bit about how that intersects with the importance of the First Amendment in the United States, because if we are going to be successful in having intelligent, thoughtful, political dialogue with the citizenry, the unlimited right of political actors to say anything they want about any subject and demean anybody that they feel like demeaning seems to require some kind of redress, does it not?

I think that is a struggle in the United States perhaps more than it is here in Canada. I would appreciate your view.

SP: That is a really interesting question. I think this is kind of a centuries-long struggle for us. It has just always been the case. If you go back to John Quincy Adams, he said that the election of 1800 was the dirtiest election in his lifetime. It was the third election America had—really partisan news. At that point, newspapers were openly partisan—not Fox parading as fair and balanced—and all kinds of slime was thrown and lies.

People were suing for slander. This has always been a problem. It is acute, pronounced and exponentially bigger now, but that tension between First Amendment rights and being able to lie about people and disseminate those lies is just ongoing. The one school of thought is you just drown out the lies. Another school of thought is the people who believe those lies live in a bubble; we are never going to get them anyway; we are never going to persuade them, otherwise. I think what is really interesting now is a new regulatory challenge, and some of what they have uncovered is that it was through Facebook that these Russian intermediaries were fueling false stories about Hillary trying to gin up tension, racial tension between people pretty successfully, and they were targeting the States where that Trump was able to flip.

That is, I think the regulation of technology and how those platforms are allowed to basically self-police right now is going to be a really interesting challenge. I do not know what the solution is going to be. I think people really disagree about this stuff, but it is so dangerous for our democracy to allow what happened last time to continue. I do not have an answer for this. I think it is just going to be this ongoing tension, but I think these platforms are introducing a whole new strain that people before this were not thinking about. Now, we actually have to grapple with it. Other countries, frankly, just have laws that govern it differently. I think you guys do, too.

They can shut it down. We just do not have that. It is tricky.

Q: Just following up on the gentleman's question, what impact do you think that independent expenditures or third-party campaigns have had on the democratic process in the U.S.? You mentioned Citizens United as being the case that allowed a lot of these to take place. Do you think there is going to be some sort of regulatory changes that will limit these types of campaigns?

SP: This is really tricky. The Citizens United was a Supreme Court decision that basically allowed for these unlimited expenditures and for people to hide who they are when they make these donations. It opened the flood for this dark money to infiltrate political campaigns. You will watch these ads, some crazy anti-Hillary ad or something and at the bottom, it is some cryptic name like "Americans for Justice and Cats."

You have no idea who is paying for this. It is all legal. The challenge here is that was a Supreme Court decision. The recourse for that is tricky. Either the Supreme Court needs to overturn its own decision which seems unlikely given the makeup of the Court, or Congress needs to do something about it. Mitch McConnell, the august leader of the Republicans who also has zero moral compass has no interest. He just wrote an op-ed in the Washington Post criticizing campaign finance reform. Campaign finance reform is pretty popular in America. This guy is really off the rails on this stuff, but it benefits the Republican Party. Yes, I think that not only has it harmed the actual process and outcomes of elections and, given extremely wealthy people outsize power in the process, but it has made people cynical. It has just made people cynical about the process, and that is so dangerous for democracy. It was something President Obama cared a lot about, and then we just never got anything done in Congress because Republicans do not want—well, some Republicans, the leader of the Republicans—campaign finance reform. I do not know. I do think there is an appetite for it. Congressional Democrats who are now in power are introducing legislation right now to combat a whole range of these really undemocratic practices that have taken hold in our system, including money and campaign finance. This stuff is popular with voters, especially young people. It will be interesting to see going forward whether we get some traction on that. At some point, how much money can flood the system? It is insane.

Q: I have two questions. One is a baby question. I am interested to know when you were writing a speech for the president, how involved was President Obama? We have read his books. We know he could write. Did he say, "Let us go over the themes and work on the words later?" Or was it, "Here is a speech for you?"

SP: That is a good question. It really depended on the speech. He is an irritatingly good writer, so he could—it is annoying. He is one of those people who could run the world and write really good speeches if he had time. He did not have time, hence the speechwriting staff. It really depended on the speech. We might say to ourselves, "Is this an education policy speech that is similar to ones he has given before and that we can work off of and we know the policy? And he is pretty comfortable with the language and so this will not be something that we need to waste his time talking to him about; he will just edit it. He will heavily edit the draft, but he does not need to talk to us ahead of time to get words on paper." Or we might ask, "Is it a speech about something controversial, new, something he is really passionate about?" In which case, he might want—then you might get up-front guidance, or he might take a stab. My boss, Cody, who worked on the bigger speeches, the set pieces that were higher profile, would often go back and forth with him where maybe the president would write in long hand on his yellow legal pad a couple of pages, and they would kind of go back and forth. It really depended. I am sure that if he had the time, he would happily write the welcome for the Girl Scouts who were coming to the White House, but that was not the nature of it. Our job was to create scaffolding, give him the best possible scaffolding based on how we understood how he thought, and then let him do his work to make it his. Our goal was just to make his job easier.

Q: The other question actually has to do with everything you have talked about in terms of the media and the tools. There was an alarming movie about Brexit that HBO just launched. And the people that funded the research that helped the leave campaign are the same people that funded the research for Trump's efforts, are the same people that were at the Koch brothers' retreat this weekend with millionaires and billionaires across the country.

It is an unknown, but do you think it is possible that a Congress engaged in this will be able to combat these forces of money and information and insidiousness in our lives?

SP: Possibly. I do not know. If they really wanted to engage, again, the problem is that Republicans run one half of Congress. I also think that the problem is bigger than America. If you think about the forces behind all this, it is forces that want to weaken our western democratic alliances and that want to change the nature of the liberal world order, post–World War Two.

These are fundamental world shifts they are trying to make, and they are using our political processes to do that. The problem is bigger than Facebook bots.

I think it is actually going to take a global effort on the part of countries like ours that share democratic values to really start to combat that. My fear is that, internally, historically, this would not have been hard for an American president to call out for an adversary for hacking our election. That would have been a no-brainer. Now, we have a president who seems to be in a literal pocket of Russia but also his party is just sitting there. They just decided not to pass sanctions against an oligarch who has been hugely problematic in breaking laws left and right. This is where we are. I am afraid that the Republicans' obsession with power is really contributing to undemocratic trends, not just in our country, but everywhere. Brexit—this is going to affect everybody. I think it is bigger than our Congress. I have no idea how we get out of this. I hope all of our elections will go well, and we will get some leaders who actually care. It is scary. Scary times.

Q: Putting backing aside for a moment, looking at the political polarization that we are seeing across the landscape in the UK and around the world and Europe as well and the U.S., in the last eight years with the Obama administration, did you not see the signs? Ultimately, it comes down to the fact that the people voted him in, or at least that is what we are led to believe. Where did you miss the signs?

SP: I do not think I, personally, missed the signs, because I thought Trump was going to win. I did. I am horrified that I thought that, but I very much felt like he was going to win. It was actually Brexit that really made me think that he was going to win. I just think that there was a—I can only speak about America semi-intelligently, and even there I am far from an expert—but I think that there was this feeling, generally, that there was this sort of naïve post-racial notion that just electing a black president meant we were all set and there were going to be no more problems. I think that if you worked in the administration, if you worked in politics, you saw that there was actually a huge backlash that was kind of building and gaining power that was scary and that Republicans were intentionally stoking. Just the candidacy of Donald Trump, just the candidacy was alarming, and he won that primary.

Once he won that primary, what was to prevent him from winning the general? Then, I also think there was just a complacency on the Democratic side, of course: Hillary will win. Then, you have to show up and vote. People did not. I think that they were not missing the signs. Now, I did not know this, because I was not privy to anything important or top secret when I worked in the White House, but, in retrospect, clearly, the American government understood what Russia was doing. They tried to warn Congressional leaders and Mitch McConnell refused to do anything about it. The FBI, now, we know—Jim Comey was investigating Trump's interactions with Russia before they were even investigating Hillary Clinton. That stuff was going on. People who know more than I do, did know that was going on. What was tricky was that they were scared to bring it up to the American people, because of the fear that if Hillary won, it would seem as though Obama had put the thumb on the scale for her.

Of course, Republicans would have capitalized on that. They were so afraid of how Mitch McConnell would politicize it that they did not say anything.

That, I find chilling. That is the stuff that is scary. I do think, globally, generally speaking, we have all been complacent and Brexit happened, and I think people—we were surprised in America and terrified that it would happen and it happened.

There is something in the air. There is something going on and people have to pay attention to it.

The last thing I will say about this is I think what is unhelpful is the billionaires at Davos sitting around twiddling their thumbs being like there it goes, liberal world order, there it goes, as long as I am still making a buck. I think that is not helpful. The conversations have to get bigger than that, and they have to be more inclusive. We cannot keep letting those people make these decisions, for what that is worth.

DG: I said I had one last question, if you do not mind.

SP: Of course.

DG: You cannot help but get this impression sharing a stage with you, which is would you ever consider running for office?

SP: Oh, God no. No. Fortunately, I live in Washington, D.C., where there is nothing to run for because we are effectively disenfranchised, so no, I never have to do that.

DG: You should move.

SP: No, I have zero desire to do that, but I might be applying for asylum here, so, please.

KE: Thank you so much for doing this. This is amazing. I am going to bring up Karim Bardeesy to give the thank you remarks.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Karim Bardeesy, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Ryerson Leadership Lab

Thanks, Kent, and thank you Don and Sarada. It is a real privilege to have on stage and be on stage with two people from whom I have learned so much about the how and why of politics. It is a great privilege. Thank you.

I just want to say thank you to the sponsors, to the Empire Club team, Kent, Jenna, Bill and Marie, the Ryerson Leadership Lab team, which I believe is mostly over there, including the students and TAs who are associated with Ryerson Leadership Lab. The Leadership Lab, as Kent mentioned, is an action-oriented think tank working at the intersection of leadership development and public policy to really advance some of our most pressing public challenges.

I am really proud of this Visiting Global Fellows Program that we have that brings people like Sarada here for three to five days to teach, to engage with stakeholders, to engage with people like you, to tell their stories.

Sarada started this morning at eight o'clock with a workshop on speechwriting and then spent time with my students, with some Indigenous changemakers, young Indigenous leaders, and now she is at this event, and we have got her chock-a-block tomorrow. And then we will be taking her to Ottawa on Wednesday, so we are very much appreciative of her time and that she has let us call her a Visiting Global Fellow and all that that means. Turns out I have the power to just decide who is a Visiting Global Fellow.

If there are any non-Canadian citizens here, we can talk. Also, thank you to the staff at Malaparte, the media team and all those who helped to prepare the food and make this event a very welcoming one. Thank you very much.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

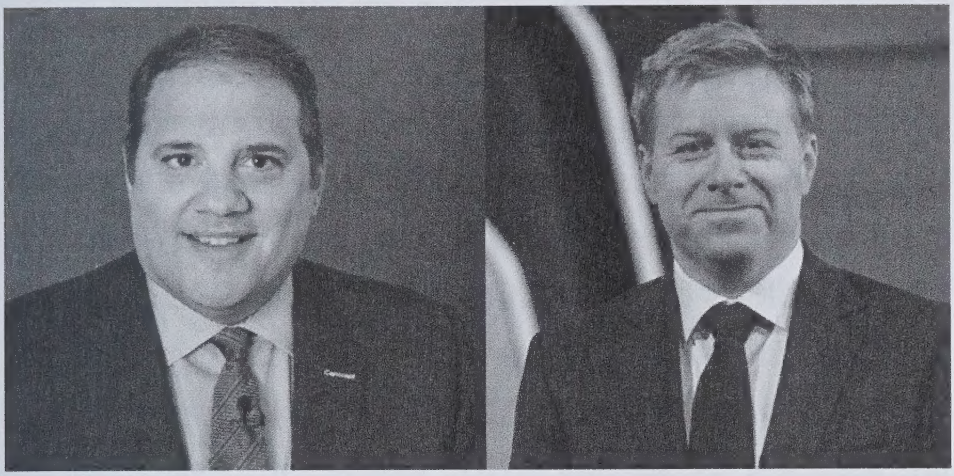
Thanks, Karim. On that note, there is more food coming. The bar is going to be reopened, so you can go home on the subway. You can also stay.

Our evening events are something that a president, Paul Fogolin, started a couple of years ago. They are meant to be fun and interactive and engaging. We will be having some more announcements on that in the next few weeks about what our next one is, but we try to do one a month. We really find that it just kind of gives more of a chance to unwind than our lunches. We have some great lunches coming up. We will have Victor Montagliani, the Vice President of FIFA on Wednesday, and we have a number of announcements coming up about provincial and federal cabinet ministers. Check the website in the next few days.

Thank you guys for coming.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents



VICTOR MONTAGLIANI,
VICE PRESIDENT OF FIFA &
PRESIDENT OF CONCACAF,

WITH KRISTIAN JACK, TSN

ON: LEADING CHANGE IN GLOBAL SOCCER: CONCACAF JOURNEY OF REFORM, GROWTH AND THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2026, A WATERSHED FOR THE REGION

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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January 30, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Omni King Edward Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present Victor Montagliani, FIFA Vice President and CONCACAF President, in conversation with TSN's Kristian Jack. Today's topic is "Leading Change in Global Soccer: CONCACAF Journey of Reform, Growth and the FIFA World Cup 2026, a Watershed for the Region."

HEAD TABLE:

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Kristian Jack, Soccer Analyst and Journalist, TSN
Mr. Victor Montagliani, Vice President, FIFA; President, CONCACAF

Guests:

Mr. David Clanachan, Commissioner, Canadian Premier League
Ms. Barbara Jesson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Jesson + Company Communications Inc.; Past President, Empire Club of Canada
Mr. Oscar Lopez, Chief Executive Officer, Mediapro Canada
Mr. Bill Manning, President, Toronto FC & Toronto Argonauts, MLSE
Mr. Scott Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Soccer Business
Mr. Bob Richardson, Senior Counsel, NATIONAL Public Relations
Ms. Stefania Szabo, Former Consul General of Hungary; Senior Consultant, Jesson + Company Communications Inc.
Mr. Ken Tanenbaum, Founder and Chairman, Kilmer Developments
Ms. Sonya Tsiros, Chief, Consular Section, U.S. Consulate General Toronto

Coming off a very successful rush in 2018, it is certainly timely to hear about FIFA's most recent experience with the World Cup, but, most importantly, we brought today's speaker in to have a look forward with us. We are so honoured to have him. We all know that the World Cup is coming to North America in 2026. Everyone is interested to know what 2026 looks like for North America, for Canada, for Toronto, and luckily Victor has brought his crystal ball.

We also know that 16 North American cities will be considered to host this game. To be considered among those 16, three cities in Canada have applied to host in what is reported to be ten games played in Canada. Those cities, of course, are Montreal, Toronto and Edmonton. FIFA will be making a final decision on what cities will make the cut. Toronto will make the cut, Victor, right? You can tell us.

I am sure no one will say anything. This is a private room. It is broadcast. No one will know. To have this discussion, we brought in a fantastic moderator. He is widely considered to be one of Canada's top soccer broadcasters. He brings more than 20 years covering the beautiful game of soccer with TSN covering the Montreal Impact, Toronto FC, and Vancouver Whitecaps, as well as those top stories from around the league. Working for TSN since 2013, he is known by soccer fans in Canada as a voice they can trust when it comes to reporting on the beautiful game domestically and internationally. Jack has been an analyst for the past five Premier League seasons, the 2014 FIFA Men's World Cup in Brazil™, the 2015 FIFA Women's

World Cup Canada™, the 2016 UEFA European Championships in France, the 2017 Gold Cup in the United States of America. He has also covered multiple MLS Cups and the 2018 CONCACAF Champions League final in Mexico for all of TSN's platforms, including TSN.ca. as well as the 2018 World Cup. He is a native of Birmingham, England, where he has made his home in Preston. He graduated from journalism school at the University of Central Lancashire. Please, welcome TSN analyst, Kristian Jack. With a lifelong commitment to football, as a player and administrator, Victor Montagliani's passion for the game has led him to become a leader of the sport.

He has been serving as CONCACAF President and FIFA Vice President since May 2016.

Through his ONE CONCACAF Vision, he continues strengthening the foundations of the Confederation while focusing on developing a professional and solid structure for its 41 member associations.

With football at its core, the ONE CONCACAF Vision consists of four pillars to further growth of the game, including good governance, successful strategic planning for competitions and commercial partnerships, investment in football development and infrastructure and solid leadership.

He served as President of the Canadian Soccer Association until May of 2017. He was a transformational President for Canada Soccer. Under his leadership, Canada Soccer hosted the Women's World Cup and helped form the professional league. Now, his talents have been recognized internationally with his work at FIFA. He is also a partner in a nationwide insurance brokerage firm, which he has grown since its inception in 2010 to over 250 employees, working alongside his business partners.

In addition to his vast knowledge and experience with the game, he has conducted studies in political science, public administration, French and Spanish. He has a tremendous amount of responsibility. If you put up the slide with all his various titles, beyond his primary responsibilities, he is also a member of the FIFA Council and the International Football Association Board.

He is the Chairman of the FIFA Football Stakeholders Committee; he is the Chairman of the FIFA Football Stakeholders Task Force, the Head of the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 Headquarters, Chairman of the FIFA World Cup Ticketing and Global Mentor for Young Leaders Mentoring Program for Sport at the Service of Humanity, which is a global movement inspired by His Holiness, Pope Francis.

Wow, he has even got the Pope in his corner. Please, welcome to the stage, the President of CONCACAF, Vice President of FIFA, Victor Montagliani. Thank you.

Mr. Victor Montagliani with Mr. Kristian Jack

KJ: Thank you, Kent.

A little bit different up here, isn't it? I can see we have got so many people here. When I was down here, I was not quite sure how many people were really here.

VM: It is all good.

KJ: It is a fantastic event. Great to be with everybody.

That video is wonderful to see what you guys have been doing at CONCACAF. I want to get to that in a second. We saw that remarkable slide up there with all your titles and all the different committees that you are on, which is marvelous.

One thing it does not tell us, Vic, is what this game means to you. What did this game mean to you as a little kid growing up in the greatest country in the world, and what does it mean to you today?

VM: First off, thanks, Kent, for the introduction. My mom would be proud. Next time we are at a family dinner, you can come over and let my family know. No, for me, football has always been about family. I see people in the audience here that have been part of that family in a lot of ways—my CSA family over here, old friends all over the room—but it really started in a really blue-collar neighbourhood in East Vancouver, obviously, a very ethnic community.

Football was really life, whether it was my dad whose favourite football club is Inter Milan—it is not my favourite football club, but it is his. He painted our garage blue and black stripes. His truck had blue and black stripes. My brother, his second son, has the middle name Mazzola, and so is named after the famous player. To be honest with you, we never really had much of a choice. It was just in our DNA from a young age. We all aspired to be footballers and just be in the game and around the game. I think it is really hard to get out of your system. You wake up in the morning, and that is all you think about. You go to sleep at night, and it is all you think about. Whether it is issues in football, whether it is about a result that did not go the way you wanted it to—and I see Mr. Manning nodding there—so it is a game that has really given me everything in a lot of ways. Obviously, everything starts with the family. That is the way I was raised, and a lot of things are due to my mom and dad and the sacrifices they made coming to this country. It stems from there, but also football is a big part of that—learning how to sacrifice, learning how to work with people, learning how to go through walls, knowing how to try to get along with people, and ultimately setting goals and trying to achieve them.

I think football is an education that is for your life, number one. You never stop learning, even at this age. It is something that has been, for me, one of the most important pillars of me as a human.

KJ: Fascinating stuff. You talk about it being ingrained in your system. You and I have known each other for a number of years. One of the things that I want to share with the audience is that you have not lost that passion for the game. I have been in the game and have been very fortunate to cover this game for over two decades, and I will never forget somebody, when I was doing work experience over two decades, telling me that when you cover the game in the media for a long time, it just becomes a job. I thought, "I do not want to be like that."

VM: I know. I agree with you.

KJ: I do not just want it to become a job. I want to still love the game. That is my sense. That is still with me, and it has still stuck with me that the game is still in my heart, because I still love it, even though it is a job, and it is a wonderful job. That is the same with you.

How important has that been with you when you have been in board rooms and governance meetings discussing about the future of the game that it still remains in your heart; it is not just a job, Vic?

VM: Absolutely. There are people in the audience that know me that have been in those rooms with me. I am—do not know if it is my Italian heritage—an emotional guy, and sometimes it shows, whether I am speaking or whether it is in a meeting and it is something that is obviously important to me, that comes out. Even now, the hardest thing I find in my role sometimes when I am in a match, watching a match, and you are in a suit and tie and I am supposed to be neutral, man, that is hard. That is really hard. That is one of the more difficult things. In fact, even at the World Cup, I had the honour of riding in the cockpit with Infantino, and throughout the tournament and the organization of it.

It was kind of funny, because for a couple of games, I was giving it that ***[gestures]***. He was looking at me and thinking, "All right."

KJ: Giovanni's got that ***[gestures].*** He has got the old.

VM: I said, "Buddy, what's going on?" He said, "I'm the FIFA President; you're the Vice President; you can do that." It is hard, but, yes, I think, honestly, if you have lost that, it might be as sign that maybe you should not be in the game.

KJ: It brings us to where we are today in Canada, 2019. We are going to get on to the World Cup shortly, but it is a terrific time to be involved in the game and see where the game has come.

The Canadian Premier League start. I know we are all excited about that this year, the development of the major league soccer teams in Canada, CONCACAF, what you have accomplished in your short time there, bringing it to an expanded Gold Cup coming this year in North America as well. There is a lot of enthusiasm right now and there should be, shouldn't there?

VM: Yes, absolutely. I think if Canada is a brand in itself, it should be pretty happy in terms of where it is at.

Obviously, there is a long way to go in some areas, from a results standpoint. Hopefully, we will see those coming in as well—maybe with the Women's World Cup, maybe the Gold Cup. I think between the work that has been done on the three Canadian MLS clubs—they have been really the top clubs off the field and on the field as well. Obviously, TFC have, in the last few years, been a top club and a flagship in a lot of ways.

I know Atlanta had a great year this year. Obviously, with the Canadian Premier launching yesterday with their announcement, there is really the creation of what I think has been lacking in this country: An industry of football. It is great at the grassroots. I think we do that better than everybody. I can say that because I get to travel to 211 countries. I think we are almost the best in the world when it comes to that—grassroots, but where we lack it is at the sharp edge of the game. Although we have had it with MLS and maybe even before that with the NASL, it has not been broad enough. It has been good in that, but it needs to be broader, where Canadians can aspire to work in football, whether as a coach or administrator or, obviously, a player. I think that to me is where we are heading, where we need to head to really change the culture of football in this country.

I think that is where we are heading right now, between the World Cup being the north star for 2026 and, as you said, with the MLS teams the way they are going, with the CPL and even things that are happening underneath that. I have been at the grassroots level, League 1 here, in Ontario. It has been a tremendous success. I think you are starting to see some significant alignment that I think could lead to maybe football—sorry, I do not call it soccer—being perhaps the sport of choice in this country, even, dare I say, in this town, surpassing our national sport.

KJ: You mentioned culture there. We will get to the World Cup shortly, but before we get to that, regarding the Canadian Premier League, you were a huge proponent of it, a big believer of it when you were with the brilliant guys at the CSA. It is starting. It is here.

One, how important is it for patience? Two, how excited are you to have this league now in Canada as you continue to represent the flag as you go across these CONCACAF regions and talk about Canada getting their own league?

VM: One of the things I did when I became President was sit down with the General Secretary at the time, who is over here, Peter, whom you introduced. There were two things that I said to him that have to be done.

Well, three. One was the execution of the Women's World Cup, which went off without a doubt. The other two were bidding for the World Cup, and a lot of people laughed at us, to be honest with you. I even have the original article, I think, in one of the Toronto papers that took a shot at us because of that. I still have it in my drawer. I am not joking you. I do not forget.

The other one was the league because I think that was one of the most important things—you talk about the flag. Actually, Peter said to me when I became CONCACAF President, "You know one of the best things, one of the unique things, now when you speak publicly anywhere in the world is that that flag will be behind you." I thought about that. That was meaningful because in football, there are only two narratives in football. There is club football, so you are a TFC fan, or you are a Forge fan or an Impact fan or an AC Milan fan, god forbid.

KJ: These things are on the way up, though. You are all right.

VM: I know they are on the way up. Or it is your national, your country. To me, it has always been about sovereignty.

One thing you never give up on football is your sovereignty.

I think the Canadian League is part of that. I know in North America we have this dynamic of cross-border, and it is important. It could be the wave of the future as well, I think. I think sovereignty, as I said before, is the industry standpoint. I think that, to me, was what league really represented. It is not just about 7, 8, 12, 15 teams. That is all great. It is about, really, the sovereignty of your country. To me, that is the most important thing in football. I see it when I travel in Central America. These guys do not give it up. They do not care. They may not have a Rolls Royce, but what they have is theirs. To me, that is very, very important. I think the role the MLS can play in Canada is they have done it where they have actually grasped that Canadiana from a development standpoint. Whether it is investing in Jonathan Osorio, or whether it is investing in the youth team ISM, and bringing players up that are now in the national team. That sovereignty can be manifested in many different ways. I think it is important that that has to really be at the core of what you do if you are a Canadian, or if you are working in Canada.

KJ: You mentioned the World Cup there. Growing up in England, I learned pretty quickly that—

VM: You are never going to win it?

KJ: We did not rehearse that, by the way, but it kind of worked out. I was eight years old when Diego Maradona pushed the ball in the back of the net and knocked England out. I learned very quickly that things could not go my way. There is nothing more powerful, for me, in sport, than those two words being put together: World Cup. Even to this day, you talk about the club game over the international game. We talk a lot on TSN about all the games we do. The club game, I think anybody in the audience would admit, at the very highest level, technically, has been played at a far superior level than we will probably ever see in international football now. There are lots of reasons for that, money being one, superior fitness, coaching, being together in camps every single day rather than international breaks that come along. There is nothing like the World Cup. We have got it now coming to this North America in 2026. Before we get to that let us take a look back at what happened in 2018 in Russia.

[VIDEO.]

KJ: Images and emotions that will stick with millions of people around the world after a fantastic World Cup, arguably one of the greatest World Cups ever. I know I had a lot of fun with CTV and TSN this year. We did over 200 hours of coverage around that World Cup.

That was great. We are in another World Cup here with the Women's World Cup again this year, which is going to be an absolute treat. But, in 2026, it is officially coming here. We talked about it earlier.

Those emotions, those memories that people—it becomes ingrained with them from the World Cup. That is going to be created here. Some of those emotions are going to be created on Canadian soil.

How significant is that, Victor, and how important is it that we, in Canada, make sure that it is not just about the 32 days of the World Cup, that it becomes so much more?

VM: I have no doubt that the tournament in 2026, in June and July, will be a fantastic success, and we will have those emotions, like every World Cup does, some more than others. Hopefully, it will be better than this one on the pitch as well. The reality is, from our perspective, first from a CONCACAF perspective, and specifically from a Canadian perspective, what we have to ensure is that it is not just a tournament in June and July of 2026, that you have a seven-, eight-year run here and beyond that. I think the planning needs to go even beyond that, that it really becomes a legacy for the sport and there are so many opportunities leading up. Actually, I met with the mayor this morning.

There are things already I think Canada can be doing. I think everybody wants to get busy with their own provincial championships and their own little club. That is all great. I think the leaders of the sport in this country need to wake up that there is an opportunity, and you need to start galvanizing together.

You have got to have the corporate world come in, in conjunction with the football community, with the federation, with the cities. It has to be all in concert, so that you can maximize every opportunity you can, so that the sport becomes what it can be after the World Cup and not just that legacy of an event. I think if you can do that, you will see really a different Canada. I know that there have been times we have had other events, maybe in other sports, where people have said it is nation-building. The reality is, with all due respect, there is really only one sport that can really do that. That is this. I hate to say that, but the Olympic Games do not really nation-build. I think they are great, and they can put an investment, but it is such a multi-sport environment that it is hard to build on anything. A lot of the sports are nonexistent in between the Olympics, let us be honest. This sport is not like that. This is in every day of your life. You have got club football; you have got youth football; you have got women's football; you have got it all. It is every year. This sport has an opportunity to really nation-build. I think this is what we have to realize in this country.

KJ: This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

VM: Absolutely.

KJ: This is also unprecedented for anybody who is not aware. It is the first World Cup, or it will be the first World Cup where three countries have come together to host. You cannot say this, so I will. You played a massive part in bringing those three countries together under the CONCACAF umbrella. Many people, not that long ago, whether in life or soccer, looked to these countries as enemies, and now they are coming together as part of, you use the word 'family', the soccer family, to come together and host the biggest World Cup ever. The relationship has already been created.

Now that Canada is a part of hosting the biggest event in the world, how important is it to show not just the world, but the United States and Mexico, under your CONCACAF umbrella, that we are as big as you guys, here? We might not be hosting as many games, but this is not just the United States World Cup with a few games thrown to Canada. This is the true tri-bid here.

VM: I can tell you from a FIFA perspective—I will put my FIFA hat on—this is not a United States World Cup.

Anybody that says that is delusional. This is a united bid World Cup between three countries with so many games in the U.S., so many games in Canada, and so many games in Mexico. That is it. It is not a U.S. World Cup. It is not a Mexico World Cup, and it is not a Canada World Cup. It is together. CONCACAF will play a role moving forward, because the region will benefit from it. It will not play a direct role as those three countries, obviously, but it will play a more indirect role. It truly is a regional World Cup. It is not going to be like '94, and it is not going to be like 2015, the Women's World Cup here, or 2007. It will not be that. It will be something completely different. It is new territory, even for FIFA.

I think it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity, and everybody is jumping on board now, because regarding 2030 already there have been some announcements. Argentina is bidding with Paraguay and Uruguay. Peter, we should have trademarked the united bid. England is looking at Scotland and Wales and, I believe, Northern Ireland to look at their bid for 2030. Spain and Portugal are looking at Morocco for kind of a united bid.

KJ: We are trailblazers here. We can show them how it is done.

VM: Absolutely. It is a unique opportunity.

KJ: I guess final question before we open up to Q&A—

make sure we get time there—is about legacy, the legacy of the World Cup. You talked about what needs to be done between now and then, is that the legacy of that should, from a player's point of view, concern the entire game so that the entire country continues to fall in love with the sport. The legacy—can you speak a little bit about that in terms of what can become of Canada and their love for the game after 2026?

VM: I think legacy, to me, is a two-sided coin. One side is the obvious side, the infrastructure side: Leagues will get better; clubs will get better; federations will get better; provincial associations will get better. That is all great. The other side is the human side, which is what I like to call it, because you just talked about how this was the greatest World Cup you remember, the '86 World Cup. I remember the '78 World Cup when you can only watch it on—I had to skip school to go to the Agrodome, so I could watch it on closed-circuit.

My dad actually allowed me to skip school. He just told me, "Do not tell your mother."

KJ: Now she knows.

VM: Now she knows. What I am saying to you is that I was a ten-year-old kid. That was a fire that was ignited in me that has lasted me my whole life. If we can ignite more fires because of our World Cup into our children, male and female, like the Women's World Cup did, when I saw grown men walking around with Christine Sinclair jerseys. If we can ignite that fire, that, to me, is a bigger legacy than a training pitch. To me, it has to do both. It has to be the obvious, what we can see, what I call the hardware, but the software, to me, is so important. It is the software that really provides the legacy for your country.

KJ: Amen to that. We could continue this discussion and talk about, obviously, the expanded Nations League for which you have been a big proponent. The Gold Cup comes this summer. It is going to be different countries, now, really, for the first time—16 teams, and the Gold Cup as well. It is a very exciting time for Canadian Soccer, CONCACAF as well.

Questions & Answers

KJ: We do have a microphone in the audience. If anybody has any questions, please, raise your hand; introduce who you are.

Q: Hi, my name is Karim. I have been a soccer referee for the last 11 years. I started out refereeing under five, and now I moved up to men's soccer, so actually if someone works for the CPL, I might come and talk to you later. I am glad I am talking to the FIFA Vice President. I guess the question I had was

currently, right now, they do not start keeping score in Canadian soccer until about age 12 or 13.

I am worried, as we work towards building a competitive 2026 team, whether that is the best way to develop talent? I do not mean to grill you, but as a soccer fan…

VM: You might not like my answer but that is okay.

Q: I guess I will open up the floor to you.

VM: I think one of the things we have to realize is where competition really matters is at the sharp edge of the game. It is for our national teams; it is for the pros over here, not for 12 year-olds. The reality is that, I will give you a name, Johan Cruyff, God rest his soul.

You have heard of Johan Cruyff—not a bad player, I would say. Johan Cruyff never played an 11-a-side football until he was the age of 13. That means they never kept score. It was all about learning this.

If it is good enough for Johan Cruyff, it is good enough for our children. I think some of the things that the CSA is implementing through Jason deVos' leadership is long overdue. Things that we have talked about are, I think, finally being implemented.

For instance, that is one of them. Trust me, the kids know the score. Who are you trying to keep score for, the parents or the kids? The kids know the score.

Trust me. Johnny knows that he scored three goals and that they won 6-4. Trust me, because he is telling the guy on Monday at recess, "Hey man, I got a hat trick on the weekend." Trust me. The game is for the kids. It is not for the adults. We need to think that way. That is number one. Number two, there are other things. For instance, some provinces have promotion and relegation at youth. That is absolutely ridiculous.

As one technical director said, "Some of the ways we treat our youth football is tantamount to child abuse." That is what I heard one technical director saying.

I do not necessarily disagree with him from a mental standpoint and psychological standpoint. We need to do a better job. I think what has been laid down by the CSA, finally, and it has been a long time coming, and it is not that we did not try to lay it down before, but I think one of the words that I would like to see federations do and the CSA do is use the word 'mandate' more often. With all due respect, one of the differences between our culture and other cultures is that people respect the infrastructure.

We do not have people running around saying, "Well, I've got my little ten-year-old club here in Burlington, and I am not going to listen to the CSA, because I know more." No. Quite frankly, anybody that thinks that way can do me a favour and actually retire, because you are actually doing a disservice to your players. The reality is you need to get with the program. The program starts with the National Federation and then to the pro clubs.

Q: **My name is Vincent Alvarado. I am a sport business management student at Humber College.**

We did not get mentioned at the beginning, but that is fine. My question for you, Victor, is, with 2026 happening, obviously, we have the Gold Cup, which is our big regional tournament. We are going to have a few of them before 2026.

Typically, the tournament is held in the United States. From a logistical standpoint, obviously, that has always been the best way forward to host that tournament. With all the infrastructure going in, all the development happening in Canada, is there a chance to finally have the Gold Cup held completely within Canada in the years leading up to the World Cup?

VM: Yes, this year is the first year that we are actually going to have venues outside of the U.S. We did have it in Toronto in 2013. We had a double header. Now, this is the first time we are having Costa Rica.

Actually, it was announced, and then there will be a Caribbean venue that we will announce in about a month's time. It is the first time we are bringing it out, because one of the things that I think the Gold Cup can do is not only expand the Gold Cup, not only develop on the pitch, but it is off the pitch in development markets. I think Canada is prime to host a Gold Cup.

I think hosting an entire tournament might, in the short run, not be probably reasonable just because, I think, with all due respect, the economics. We do not have 100,000-seat stadiums, to be blunt with you.

When I can sell out the Rose Bowl at 100,000 seats, you have to balance development with economics.

I have still got mouths to feed at CONCACAF and then my development department and people asking me for money for this and this and that, so I cannot turn down 100,000 seats at the Rose Bowl, because I am going to put it in a 23,000-seat stadium. Can I have more games in Canada? Absolutely.

Toronto is a fantastic market. We know Vancouver is. We have other markets that are coming on board in Alberta, in Winnipeg and, obviously, Montreal, even Halifax one day. What I am saying is I think Canada can play a bigger role in the Gold Cup perhaps from a venue standpoint, but, in terms of hosting the entire Gold Cup in Canada, I do not see that in the near future.

Q: Stephen Henderson. I am an intellectual property entertainment lawyer here in Toronto at Cassels

Brock. My question is we have seen Calgary reject putting a bid forward for the Olympics.

We have seen Vancouver decide not to bid as part of the World Cup bid. I am wondering how you can mobilize the World Cup bidding cities in Canada, but also in the U.S. and Mexico to try to ensure that the various levels of government actually support the bid in the way that you would like to see it happen?

VM: Are the governments supporting the bid?

Q: In terms of how can you mobilize them to ensure that the World Cup comes off in the best way possible?

VM: From a government standpoint, it is more about having some guarantees that are part of the bid package.

Those have been given by the feds and the provincial government. After that, really, a lot of the engagement is not so much with the feds and the provincial government. There is some of it, but it is really at the local level with the cities. That is where a lot of the energy will go, whether it be fan fests and those kinds of things. The federal level of government is more involved when the event happens. Even at the Olympics, for instance. I am from Vancouver. The federal government was not involved other than, obviously, funding some of it, but they were kind of there when the Olympics were on, because, obviously, they are our federal government, and they were there at meetings and stuff like that.

You will see that, but a lot of the engagement of a lot of these international events happen at the local level, as it should, really.

Q: **My name is Peter Kotsopoulos. I am part of the corporate world. I have been a coach for a long time, a player for a long time. My background is similar to yours. My parents are from another country, and I was born here.**

I have got a lot of passion. As a coach, I would say that the kids have always been happy until the parents tell them not to be happy. Here is my question, and out of respect for the CSA, who are in the room: When Canada fields a worthy national team for the World Cup and Italy makes the world cup, or hopefully makes the World Cup, who are you going to cheer for?

KJ: He is going to make sure they are not in the same group.

VM: Let me tell you something. Cold, hot. First of all, the World Cup in 2026 has a possibility of having eight teams from the CONCACAF region, because it is 6 ½, plus you get another half, because you are the host.

We could get eight teams. Let me tell you something right now. I will cheer for all eight of those CONCACAF teams before I cheer for Italy.

KJ: I think that is a great way to finish right there.

Again, please, join me in thanking Victor Montagliani.

KE: I have the pleasure of also inviting Bill Manning, the President of Toronto FC and Toronto Argonauts up to the stage to give a thank you to Victor and to Kristian.

Thank you, Bill, for being a sponsor. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Bill Manning.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Bill Manning, President, Toronto FC and Toronto Argonauts

It is my honour, today, to give the closing remarks. Thank you, Kent, and the Empire Club for putting on a great event, today. It was probably seven or eight years ago when Victor first came on my radar screen. I was running a team in major league soccer, called Real Salt Lake.

There was a new president of Canada Soccer, and he was very vocal and very boisterous, and we had not seen anyone in Canada like this man before.

He talked about the Canadian women's team being the best in the world—not being among the best, but the best team in the world. He was the first person I can remember from Canadian soccer to talk about the Canadian men's national team being a regional power, along with Mexico and the United States and being a world team that could be amongst the top 20 or 30. I checked this quote.

You said, "Canada Soccer, within the next 10–15 years, will be one of the top 20 or 30 teams in the world." I will tell you, we are well on our way. Canada will be amongst the best 20 or 30 teams in the world, probably by 2026, 2030, maybe even 2034, but it is because of this man that they will get there. They hosted the 2015 Women's World Cup, which was arguably the greatest Women's World Cup ever. That was certainly because of Victor.

In 2016, he went to CONCACAF. I remember, and we had not met yet. We had not met until I came here to Toronto.

I remember saying, "Wow, this guy is not only going to do things, he is going to do things for this region." I got a chance to get to know Victor a bit when I joined TFC over the last few years. In sports, we use a term, 'the real deal', when you talk about a player. This guy is the real deal.

He is the real deal. This World Cup, I will tell you: There is no one in the world more responsible for uniting three countries, the United States, Mexico, and Canada, to host a World Cup than this guy right here.

He is the only guy that could take those three countries, put them together, and, I predict that the World Cup 2026 will be the greatest World Cup this world has ever seen, and it is because of this man. He is a great leader, great collaborator and a great friend. Please, another round of applause for Victor.

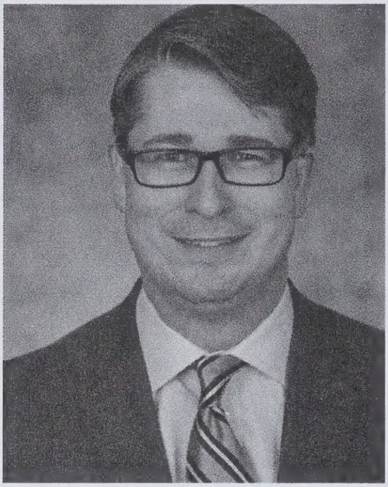
Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

A couple of quick announcements. I want to make one more thank you to Bob Richardson, who is a mentor of mine. He has done a terrible job at that, but he did a fantastic job at helping with this event and doing a lot of stuff for this event. Thank you very much, Bob. A couple of more individuals in this room that I found out were here: One is Councillor Mark Grimes, who is the Councillor for Ward 6, and the second is Rudy Cuzzetto, the new MPP for Mississauga–Lakeshore. If you could, please, stand. I just want to recognize you. Thank you for coming as well.

We have a great event coming up next month, which I believe starts almost the day after tomorrow. That is with the President of MDA with the topic "Canada in the New Trillion Dollar Space Economy." That is a great event.

We have some other political events coming up with the federal and provincial government that we will be announcing in the coming days. Ladies and gentlemen, thanks for coming today.

The meeting is adjourned.



TONY IRWIN

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
FEDERATION OF
RENTAL-HOUSING
PROVIDERS OF ONTARIO,

WITH: NO VACANCY: TACKLING ONTARIO'S RENTAL HOUSING SUPPLY CRISIS

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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February 26, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the One King West in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present Tony Irwin, President of the Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario. Today's topic is "No Vacancy: Tackling Ontario's Rental Housing Supply Crisis." This is a very hot topic in Toronto right now and is one that various levels of governments have recognized.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

Mr. Tony Irwin, President and Chief Executive Officer, Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario

Guests:

Ms. Ana Bailao, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ward 9 (Davenport), City of Toronto

Ms. Heather Brady, National Director, Sales, Yardi Canada

Ms. Margaret Herd, Senior Vice President, Residential Property Management, Park Property Management Inc.

Ms. Ziggy Krupa, Management Consultant, Cedar Croft Consulting Ltd.; Treasurer, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Laurie LeBlanc, Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Government of Ontario

Ms. Nicole McNeill, President & Chief Administrative Officer, Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC)

Mr. Rob Pike, President, Minto Apartment REIT

Mr. Tyler Seaman, Head of Hotels and Multi-Residential, North America, Oxford Properties

In the last four years, in particular, they have doubled down on issues trying to improve housing.

When you think about this topic, everyone agrees with the problem: That there is not enough rental housing to go around in the GTA. This is something that other jurisdictions have been dealing with a lot longer than we have. Years ago, in the 1990s, when I arrived in Manhattan, I was successful in finding an apartment because I was willing to tip management one month's rent and travel to Queen's to procure a special bottle of vodka to give to the super.

At that point in time, he was willing to vouch for my character. Those activities were once unheard of in Toronto. Now, I have been hearing more and more stories like that.

That is because Toronto's vacancy rate is low, around 0.5%. This has forced rental housing prices to skyrocket. The influx in new population in the GTA will continue. In a 2017 study by the Ontario Ministry of Finance, they predicted 2.8 million people by 2041 will enter the GTA, alone. This will really continue to put pressure on the housing equation.

In recent years, governments have taken action, such as the Ontario Government in 2017. Perhaps, the most notable initiative that they did was the Non-Resident Speculation Tax. However, there were also a number of changes on the supply side around surplus land and allowances for the City of Toronto to tax vacant homes.

In October, Mayor Tory announced his three-point housing plan, which includes the speeding up of approvals, creating new units through the current city land and working with provincial and federal governments on government lands. In January, city council voted 21-4 in favour of the creation of 10,000 new units. We all know that the Ontario Government has recently made a number of changes to the Landlord and Tenant Board and around rent control.

Recently, Minister Steve Clark wrapped up his consultation on the government's Housing Supply Action Plan that was undertaken to inform the new government's plan on how they will be addressing housing, going forward.

Tony, I think there are a lot of things going on. In part, I think you are here to talk about them and to tell us what you think is working and what you do not think is working and to give us your projection. Let us get started.

Today's speaker has a tremendous vantage point to talk to us from the helm of FRPO. The Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario is the largest association in Ontario representing those who own, manage, build and finance, service and supply residential homes.

Before joining FRPO, he was President and CEO with the Canadian Consumer Finance Association, a national trade association representing businesses that provide a range of financial products to Canadians. Previously, he was Vice President of North American Government Affairs with Dollar Financial Group, Inc., where he served as Chairman of the Canadian Payday Loan Association and was active with the Community Financial Services Association of America.

He also is experienced in the insurance industry, where he implemented a national government relations strategy and served as official company spokesman for Allstate.

Tony has also served as Executive Director of the Justin Eves Foundation, a non-profit organization granting scholarships and bursaries to learning-disabled and disadvantaged young people to assist them in achieving a post-secondary education. In government, he has also held key political roles: Senior Advisor to an Ontario premier and Executive Assistant to the leader of the opposition.

Please, welcome the President of FRPO, Tony Irwin.

Mr. Tony Irwin

Thank you, Kent, for the warm introduction. Kent and I go back a number of years from, I guess, a few lifetimes ago. The world is small, and so I am honoured. It is an honour and privilege to be invited to this prestigious podium. I think I was in the room at the back, but I saw upon the screens some of the previous speakers who have stood at this podium. Really, they are many remarkable leaders, over 3,500 prominent Canadian and international leaders since 1903, and I am very grateful to be among that group of such distinguished individuals.

I also would like to thank a few of our board members who are here, today. Board Chair, Margaret Herd, Ken Kirsh, Rob Pike, Tyler Seaman, I want to thank you and also want to extend my appreciation to Yardi Canada and to Minto for making this event possible. Thank you so much.

Kent, of course, explained the role that I now fill with FRPO and talked a little bit about what FRPO is. For over 30 years, we have represented the rental housing sector in Ontario, and we are the largest association in the province representing those who own, manage, build, finance, service and supply residential rental homes. FRPO represents more than 2,200 members who own or manage over 350,000 units across Ontario. I am pleased to have this forum today to talk about something vitally important to the city and to this province: access to adequate rental housing. Before I start, though, I would like to share a story.

One of our members was proposing a new rental building in Dundas, Ontario, a community with historically one of the tightest rental markets in Southern Ontario. It was an infill proposal next to an existing seven-storey rental building they owned, but it required nine storeys with 64 suites for the project economics to be viable. To give you some sense of the neighbourhood, there were already four nine-storey condos and a 13-storey building within 400 metres of the site. What was being proposed was not atypical to the neighbourhood. The proposal required a zoning by-law amendment. Our member went through a three-year process before finally securing all the necessary approvals from city staff, planning committee, city council, et cetera.

You might think that is the end of the story. You would be wrong because a decision was appealed to the external planning appeals body by a resident, who simply paid a $175 fee. What happened next? It took our member seven months to get a pre-hearing, six more months to get a first five-day block with a member of the Appeal Board, five more months to get a second five-day block with the member, and then, 14 more months before the appeal was dismissed.

To recap, a project that was seeking density that was consistent with the immediate neighbourhood took almost six years to be approved. By that time, construction costs had increased significantly to the point where the developer is now reviewing to see whether the project is even feasible to proceed. Likely, it will not be.

This story illustrates some of the challenges our industry faces as we try to add more supply to the market. Today, I am going to share some practical policy solutions we think government can consider implementing to help address the rental housing supply crisis we currently face in Ontario today.

As rental housing providers, we believe we have an obligation to be the best corporate citizens we can be, providing the best product and helping tenants who need it. Our members are aware and sensitive to real struggles of affordability facing many Ontarians on a daily basis. We are supportive of measures that help tenants address housing costs, such as shelter alliances, portable housing benefits, and income support programs. We want people to stay in our buildings, so our members can benefit from long-lasting and positive relationships with their tenants.

We have had tenants who have lost their jobs and were not able to cover their rent, so the property manager hired them as building superintendents and forgave unpaid rents. We have many examples of housing rental providers proactively making accessibility investments to improve the daily lives of their tenants. We have examples of property managers waiving rent increases to individuals on fixed incomes, who truly cannot afford the increase. There are examples of rental housing providers doing things every day to help the broader community in collaboration with tenants. In Thorncliffe Park, for example, the property owner is using half an acre as a community garden while working with tenants and a community group. The crop is harvested and given to a local school for a lunch program.

As the subject of my speech conveys, there is a crisis when it comes to housing in Ontario, especially, adequate supply of rental housing. The primary indicator to assess the health of a rental housing market is its vacancy rate.

I think, as was alluded to at the outset, vacancy rates have been trending downward for the past few years in Ontario. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) figures for 2018 showed Ontario was at a 16-year low of 1.8%. The problem is even worse in the city of Toronto where the vacancy rate was 1.1%. To provide you some context, last year, Alberta's vacancy rate was at 5.5%; Saskatchewan, 8.7%; Newfoundland and Labrador, 6%.

Most experts believe a healthy rental market should have a 3%–4% vacancy rate.

Why is this happening in Ontario? A recent Urbanation report concluded Ontario's housing demand is at a 45-year high. Rental housing demand is driven by strong job growth with more and more people choosing to live in Ontario, and specifically in the GTA and by the increasing cost of home ownership. Quite simply, new units are not coming onto the market fast enough to meet the increasing demand for rental housing. In fact, it is getting worse. The number of new purpose-built rental units in Ontario decreased in 2018 over 2017, going from 8,500 to 6,800. The Urbanation report concluded that unless significant policy action is taken to spur construction, Ontario will have between a 7,000-

to 10,000–unit annual deficit by 2029. That means Ontario must build 70,000–100,000 new units in the next ten years to fill the supply gap. This is a serious challenge. That is why we are pleased to see the province committing to taking strong action to address the housing supply crisis and doing so on a consultative manner.

Rental housing providers and other stakeholders, some of whom are in this room today, have been part of many in-person consultation sessions to assist the government in developing its Housing Supply Action Plan. We are pleased to see the province open to looking at new solutions.

To get a balanced market, policymakers must take an outcome-based approach. The intended outcome is straightforward: Stimulate development of 70,000–100,000 rental housing units over the next ten years to fill the supply gap.

But there is no one magic bullet. Various policies must be designed to bring more rental housing development in places where it makes sense and at a quicker pace.

The former government took the first step last year by creating an exemption for new units from the rent increase guideline. This exemption will undoubtedly improve the feasibility of new housing projects and spur more development to occur at a time when it is most needed. It is a great start, and we commend the government for taking strong policy action to improve supply, the precursor to addressing affordability and choice for tenants, but more needs to be done.

One of the biggest challenges to getting more rental housing built in Ontario is the red tape that causes huge delays in getting rental units to market. As my story mentioned, at the beginning, approvals are often delayed due to nimbyism and some neighbourhood politicians acting in their own electoral self-interest to fight projects contrary to provincial policy interests.

To get out of the rental housing crisis we are in, we need land use policies that encourage developments in places where it makes sense. Many here are familiar with land use planning in our province. Ontario has, for example, a Places to Grow Act, for areas where it wants development to occur. We also have a "Places to Not Grow Act."

By that, I mean protected areas such as the Greenbelt. What we need right now is a provincial policy-led spark to spur construction of rental housing in places where it makes sense, a new legislative framework that drives that outcome. We can call it the "Places to Fast Track Rental Housing Act." The concept is relatively simple: To provincial authority, provide pre-permitting and as-of-right zoning for rental housing developments in areas where it makes sense and housing is needed. This does not mean forced intensification in established, single-family neighbourhoods. That is not the answer. The proposed provincial zoning for rental housing could be targeted in the following types of areas: along higher order transit routes and around transit stations; declining retail locations, like strip plazas; commercial avenues with strip commercial, such a Dundas St. in Mississauga; underutilized industrial lands where manufacturing will not come back. You would only do this in select communities where the additional supply can be consumed by market demand. The policy framework should be time limited to create urgency to builders and to get rental housing development going now as opposed to slowly planning for a pipeline of projects. We could pilot this concept for five years and then reassess based on success.

What does cutting approval time in a pre-permitted, as-of-right zoning framework do for project economics?

We recently commissioned the Altus Group to look at this very issue. The conclusion was that cutting approval time from a typical four years to something closer to six months would result in 11% savings on the cost of building rental projects. This would undoubtedly move many projects from being not feasible to projects that are economical for the developer to proceed with. Creating this framework of time-limited, as-of-right zoning in targeted areas for purpose-built rentals to incent development is one tool in the toolbox, but we need more. When looking at the typical cost structure of rental housing developments after hard construction costs, the next two biggest cost drivers are cost of land and development fees and charges. We appreciate that all governments face fiscal challenges; however, government fees and charges do represent a significant barrier to development. Eighteen percent of the cost of a typical rental housing project in the city of Toronto can be attributed to HST, development charges and other government-imposed fees and charges.

The cost of land is another issue we need to find creative ways to address. It represents over a quarter of the cost of projects or 26%, to be exact. We all understand the problem. Land in Toronto and the GTA is becoming more and more expensive. Projects underway today are based on land prices from two or three years ago. Land in Toronto may have been valued at $75 a buildable square foot then, so a particular development may have been feasible at that price point. Today, land prices have tripled or quadrupled, meaning many projects you see in the queue would not proceed if the decision were being made today. The costs of lands make it increasingly more difficult to find opportunities for rental housing developments with the right business case to proceed. How do we solve this? No one will give you free land to build rental housing, but we can ensure we get maximum value on existing rental housing complexes. You may have driven around rental housing properties with a few buildings, and you may have also noticed that some have space for maybe a third or even a fourth tower. We call them "unicorn sites." These sites are abundant in the province. They represent untapped potential to put more units on the market without any cost to buy new land. What can government do to realize this potential? Ontario could develop a framework mandating approval of additional towers on these sites, conditional on a set of reasonable parameters to avoid nimbyism from stopping these developments, or it could create an application-based concierge program approving development on these sites using provincial authority. These are, surely, reasonable solutions that could be utilized to provide much-needed supply when it is most needed. Creating a framework for time-limited, as-of-right zoning and unlocking the potential of unicorn sites are two measures government can take to spur more supply, but we must do more. There are many municipal policies that add cost to developments, but do not provide direct revenue to municipalities. We can call them "embedded costs."

These policies may make sense in the vacuum but must be reviewed in the current supply crisis as they inhibit development of more rental units. They often work to reduce density in certain locations. For example, Section 37 of the Planning Act allows the City to ask for benefits when a development requires a zoning by-law amendment, the tools intended to provide greater density in exchange for community benefit. But often zoning is artificially low and out of date, so Section 37 winds up being used as a bargaining tool to get density that should have been allowed to begin with.

Another example is inclusionary zoning. Suppose a developer wants 35 floors. The City ends up only permitting 19 and says two of the floors have to be affordable housing. You are left with only 17 floors of market rent. Having reduced the number of units by half, as in this example, would kill most rental housing projects. This reflects the lived experience of some of our members in the mid-town plan area. You can imagine how many potential rental housing projects are being left undeveloped.

There are other examples of policy decisions by municipalities that move the needle on the business case away from development. These include unreasonable parkland requirements and parking ratios. We are not against the intent of either of these policies, but these policies are often outdated and need to reflect today's environment.

For example, parking ratios for buildings near transit stations should be reviewed. Many millennials do not own cars. The days of two-car families, especially in apartment buildings in urban areas, are long gone, so parking ratios should be modernized in a manner that makes sense, reflecting the needs of today's renters. These types of municipal by-laws impact the number of rental housing units coming onto the market. So far, we have talked about three things government can do to get more rental supply on the market, but that still will not be sufficient to get 70,000–100,000 new units we need in the coming decade. The government also needs to look at the overall operating climate that informs investment decisions in rental housing projects. Operating rental housing is becoming increasingly challenging. The current stock of rental units in Ontario is relatively old. Over 80% of units were built before 1980, and only 7% have been built since the year 2000. In Toronto, less than 4% have been built since the year 2000.

Historically, vacancy decontrol has been the ingredient that makes the rent control regime workable in these older buildings. Essentially, when a tenant leaves, rent can be reset to market level. That is how rental housing providers ensure a revenue stream to address the cost of repairs and maintenance of these older buildings.

However, as the supply gap is increasing, fewer and fewer people are leaving their units. Turnover has gone down dramatically with some who used to report turnover rates at 25%–30% now reporting rates at closer to 10%. This, coupled with rising pressure from organized groups fighting legal above-guideline rent increases has made the climate for operating rental housing very challenging.

That climate informs investment decisions. A reasonable solution to address this changing dynamic would be to move to a CPI-plus-2% model for an annual rent increase guideline. This measure would alleviate some of the emerging pressures on feasibility of operating rental housing projects.

There are a few other measures that government can take to address the general climate that impacts rental housing decisions: reform and accurately resource the Landlord and Tenant Board, provide more certainty for landlords and tenants in an above-guideline increase application process, and prohibit the cultivation of cannabis in rental housing units.

There is no one magic bullet to address the supply crisis in rental housing in the province of Ontario.

The government must tackle the problem from an outcome-based approach. We need 70,000–100,000 new rental units to balance the market over the next decade. We are proposing concrete policy measures that will help address the supply gap: a time-limited, as-of-right zoning framework to pre-permit rental housing in areas where it makes sense, away from single-family neighbourhoods, along transit corridors and stations, and other more receptive places;

a provincial application-based concierge service to unlock the full potential of unicorn sites where you can add buildings to existing rental complexes to address the increasing cost of land; a review of municipal policies that reduce the number of rental units that come to market, resulting from imbedded costs, such as misuse of Section 37, inclusionary zoning, inappropriate parking ratios, especially near transit nodes; and a modernization of policies around rent control in an environment where turnovers are decreasing and opposition to above-guideline increases is increasing.

These are some proposals among a suite of measures we are asking the government to consider in order to tackle our rental housing supply crisis. Rental housing is a critical segment of Ontario's housing supply and will continue to become more important as our population grows and the cost of owning a home continues to rise. Let us do what is right, and let us get more rental housing built in Ontario, starting now. FRPO and our members look forward to working with all levels of government to get this done. Thank you very much.

KE: Thanks Tony that was great. We have a couple of people standing by with microphones for the Q&A.

And I will ask that anyone who is going to ask a question, please, introduce yourself and introduce the organization you are from. I will start it off while people are thinking. Today, you discussed a number of policy prescriptions you have done, Tony, policies of different complexities. If you had to pick the one, either the lowest-hanging fruit or the one that—if you had to pick one on a desert island, which one would it be?

TI: I was just thinking about being on a desert island. I think that I would probably say they are obviously all important, but if I had to choose one, I think, really, unlocking these unicorn sites I talked about. Sites where there are a few towers have room to build additional towers.

Speaking with our members and having a sense of what they have to go through, which I conveyed through the story I told at the beginning, I find that there has got to be a better way. The land is there. It is not being fully utilized. We need more units. Let us pave the way to be able to make those sites into ones that can be further developed where we can get more towers, more units for people who need places to rent. That would be my answer.

Q: Hi, Tony. My name is Andrew McCallum. I am here as President of the Waterloo Regional Apartment Management Association. Outside of Toronto, municipalities are acting in isolated ways, making decisions that are having and adding similar challenges to development and rental housing along the way.

I guess my question is, if we are to look at some of the issues that are confronting smaller municipalities outside the big city, what might be some solutions, from your point of view?

TI: Thank you for that question, Andrew. I would think that, certainly, in smaller communities where we come from, allowing secondary suites. Right now, certainly that is something I think that a lot of governments recognize, laneway suites. Secondary suites are also something that should be considered, and the barriers should be eased to be able to make those accommodations more possible.

Development charges should be probably waived on those sorts of—they were already paid when the original house was built. They do not have to pay development charges a second time to build a secondary suite. It does not seem to be the most hospitable for those who want to create more units. All those sorts of measures—I would think that in communities like Waterloo, secondary suites are very important. We need to look at all options for places where people can live.

If that can be done, then I think municipal governments need to, are starting to, but need to do more to make that feasible.

Q: Hi. Rachael Kelebay, member of the Ontario Association of Architects and member of their Housing Affordability Task Group. Thank you. I was talking with your predecessor with this organization, and you put out great reports. The Ontario Places to Grow Plan, when it was originally put out, gave municipalities, what, three years to upgrade their densities and planning to match. What would be the effect, and still has not happened, what would be the effect if, for instance Toronto's land use and densities matched the Ontario targets?

TI: I think density is—and I am mindful of the Deputy Mayor of Toronto in the audience here, knows far more about specifics to the City of Toronto density than I would claim to, but I think the point is that, certainly from our point of view, density is something that has to be addressed head on. We recognize, people recognize where housing is needed, but then when a mid-rise building wants to be built, people are all saying that is not okay and they are protesting against it. Certainly, bringing plans and the harmony make sense, but I think, more importantly, density is a reality of our future. We have to embrace the fact that more density is needed. There are thoughtful ways to go about it.

I am not suggesting we do it in residential neighbourhoods but I do think we do need to acknowledge the fact that if we are going to house the increasing number of people that choose to live in Ontario every year, we need density to be able to do that.

Going back and updating plans, the provincial plan, which is happening now where we are suddenly been in consultations with the Ontario government on that and municipalities to say we need to look at plans that are outdated and see about making them, bringing them in alignment with what makes more sense going forward in the future, so we can actually have density that makes sense in places where it makes sense to be able to provide more housing to people. I think that is the goal that we need to be striving for.

Q: Also, to have more as-of-right zoning and approvals to reduce the risk in the timeline, the approvals timeline.

TI: Absolutely, yes. Absolutely. Thank you.

Q: Thanks, Tony. It is Ron Tam. I am with private property managers in north Toronto, Byron Properties. You mentioned that 80% of the rental stock is from before 1980. I just wanted you to speak to this issue, please: One of the costs, I think, that we have contemplated in looking at redevelopment opportunities is replacement cost. When you have,

say, an existing low-rise building and where there is an opportunity to redevelop that into something with higher density, one of the stumbling blocks is the replacement cost, and dealing with, I guess, incentivizing the existing tenants to relocate while redevelopment is ongoing. I am just wondering if there was any discussion on how to approach that, if that, as a policy, has been looked at, if there is a streamlined way for that to occur in a way that achieves the policy of increasing density but, of course, also recognizing that existing tenants might have a challenge in that situation.

TI: It is certainly topical, for those reading the Toronto Star over the last couple of days. I guess what I would say, what is first and foremost, is certainly—and I know this from speaking with our own members—making sure that tenants come first. They are the customer. They are the person that lives in the building.

Yes, understanding that we need to be able to modernize buildings, improve buildings—perhaps, sometimes it means you need to undergo major renovation, or it means working with the tenants to make sure that they understand what you are wanting to do. It means making sure that they are treated fairly and respectfully. I think this is something that just at a human level is important in all we do. I think our members certainly support that. Where do you find the balance between wanting to improve your buildings, bring them up to a better sort of state, but also ensure that the tenants are respected, whether that be providing them with supports during that period of time, providing them with a reasonable sum of money to maybe go somewhere else, a chance to come back when the work is done? There are all kinds of different ways it can be addressed, but I think we need to make sure the people are treated fairly and with dignity, but also, at the same time, we need to improve our buildings. It is always a balancing act.

Q: Hi, Bryan Levy from Preston Group. I just want to talk about development charges. They have gone up—I guess with the three years' plan—100% in three years. The first increase was November 1, 2018, at 50%. Then, this coming November 1st, another 30%, and then, November 1st, 2020 another 20%. Given that we are coming up to the second increase this November 1st, is there anything that we are doing to, I guess, to change that from what it was decided? Clearly, it is a huge stumbling block.

You talked about the timing to getting these approvals. A lot of these projects that were brought forth a couple of years ago are now looking at, in some cases, doubling development charges, and going up $5, $10 million on a given project simply just

kills the project. Is there anything that is immediate that is coming to change that coming increase November 1st or next year's increase?

TI: I am probably the wrong guy to ask about what immediately is coming since I am not the one who will be making any of those decisions, but my colleague, Darryl Chong, from the Greater Toronto Apartment Association is here, today, and I know he spends a lot of time at City Hall. I think he has a frequent flyer pass to get him in and out of there for all the time he spends speaking with councillors and staff at City Hall.

At the provincial level, Deputy Minister LeBlanc has probably seen us more than she ever imagined that she would in the last three months or so. We have spent a lot of time working, talking with the government on a variety of issues. Development charges, certainly, are part of that mix, part of the conversation. I will focus on that, since that is more where I have been spending my most recent time on. Nevertheless, understanding the development charges, as I talked about in my remarks, are a major component of building costs. For those who want to build rental apartments, that is a huge challenge. Yes, we understand that development charges are necessary. Growth is supposed to pay for growth, after all, but it is complicated. Economics do need to work, obviously, do need to be feasible for a project to proceed.

And we are working with the government, certainly, at the provincial level, and I know with the city, too, to ask whether there are different options, better ways we can go about this. We have talked about the GTA, talked about perhaps a separate category for proposed rental housing. Is that a solution? We are all about coming up with as many different solutions as we possibly can with the end goal of trying to get more rental housing built. That is the goal. I think that is the goal everyone wants. All forms of housing are needed, but for the purpose of what I do, rental housing is the goal, and so I think we have governments who are interested working with us on it. That is not an immediate answer for you for what is happening tomorrow or next month, but we have positive conversations occurring with the government, and we are hopeful that good things will come.

KE: Tony, thank you.

TI: Thank you so much.

KE: Appreciate it.

TI: Thanks.

KE: I am pleased to welcome Heather Brady, National Sales Manager for Yardi Canada, today's lead sponsor, to come to the podium and thank the speaker.

Note of Appreciation, by Ms. Heather Brady, National Sales Manager, Yardi Canada

Good afternoon. I am Heather Brady. I am the National Director of Sales of Yardi Canada. For those of you in the room who do not know Yardi—although, I suspect that is very few—we are a developer, designer and supporter of software that is focused solely on the real estate industry.

We have been doing that for over 30 years—20 in Canada. We are very happy to be supporters of events like today.

It is great to be in this setting in the Empire Club, which hosts so many prestigious speakers, but also gives platform to great ideas and is a great venue to be able to share and discuss those ideas.

We have also been heavy supporters of FRPO over the years for exactly the reasons that you may have seen today. It is an organization that embraces and looks to the future, looks at the challenging issues of the future and really comes up with solid, evidence-based ideas about how to change that. We are happy to be part of that. I hope the discussion today gives all of us something to think about, about how we can be part of the solution. Thank you, Tony. It was a very good discussion. Have a great afternoon, everyone. Thank you.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thank you so much for coming, everyone. We have a few events coming up.

On Thursday, we have the Honourable David Lametti, Canada's Attorney General and Minister of Justice—a very interesting time about that portfolio.

Please, come on Thursday, if you can. Then, we have an International Women's Day Panel on March 5th, featuring the Honourable Mary Ng.

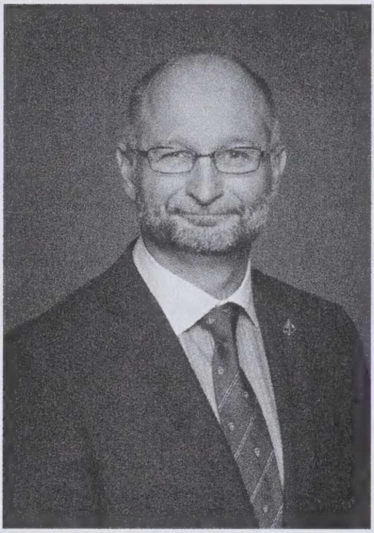
I see some heads nodding over there. Yes, thanks, I think you guys are coming to that.

Thank you for buying a table. We are going to have the Honourable Vic Fedeli.

It is not quite on the website, but it will be up in the next few days on March 28th. Thank you very much for coming today.

The meeting is adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents



THE HONOURABLE DAVID LAMETTI

MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA

Welcome Address, by Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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February 28, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Imperial Room at the Royal York Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present the Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

The Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

Guests:

Ms. Georgina Blanas, Executive Director, Private Capital Markets Association of Canada; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Daniel Brock, Partner, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP

Mr. John A. Campion, Partner, Gardiner Roberts LLP; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Harry Dahme, Partner, Gowling WLG

Mr. Nicholas Daube, Director of Policy, Office of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

Ms. Julia Shin Doi, General Counsel, Board of Governors, Ryerson University

Mr. Alim Lalani, Associate General Counsel, Waste Connections Canada

The Empire Club of Canada has had a long tradition of hearing from Canada's Justice Minister. The first instance was in 1921, nearly 100 years ago, from Attorney General and Justice Minister Charles Doherty in the government of Prime Minister Borden. The intent of his speech was to argue for the need for an international criminal court. Doherty said, at the time, "I think it still remains true that there is one thing more precious than humanity, one thing which the hearts of men feel that they cannot do without, one thing that is more absolutely necessary than peace, and that is justice." He went on to say that "Peace is a continued existence of stable justice."

For Doherty, justice was the fundamental principle that underscored his support for the international court.

One hundred years later, in the interest of justice, we are having a meeting of the Empire Club to listen to our newly sworn in attorney general. Not to overstate the obvious, but I do think it is fair to say today's guest was appointed at a challenging time. Attorney General Lametti, because of that, Canadians are especially interested in hearing from you, today, making your presence here especially relevant.

Last week, in front of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, you talked about the role of the attorney general and preserving something that Canadians put the highest importance on, which is the rule of law.

I was glad to learn from your team that you intend to address some of the issues here, today, to support what has become a national discussion on this issue. It has continued to play out through developments in the Committee yesterday and from the words of our prime minister last night.

Fundamentally, because it will be your job to stand up on behalf of Canadians going forward, we are interested to know what your beliefs are, what your plan is, and what fundamental principles you hold as you make important decisions for Canadians in the times ahead. After all, you are empowered to stand up for the interests of Canadians to have the last say on extradition matters and matters protecting the rights of Canadians as listed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Let us face it, the world is changing. When US National Security Advisor, John Bolton, is out there saying the International Court of Justice is ineffective and partisan, it really makes you look at the 1921 Empire Club speech by a former attorney general and, number one, you think that the speech is very relevant today, and, number two, you see how many of today's concerns south of the border around international law are cropping up, flying in the face of what we assumed were permanent institutions of agreed principles from our post-war alliances. In its place, we have confronted new challenges. Our new attorney general will confront unforeseen challenges. Minister, that is why Canadians know the incredible relevance and importance of your role. With that context, let us get started. Today's speaker comes to politics as a full professor in the Faculty of Law at McGill University, specializing in property, intellectual property as well as private and comparative law. He was also a member of McGill University's Quebec Research Centre of Private and Comparative Law and the co-founder and member of the McGill Centre for Intellectual Property Policy. He served as the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Law at McGill University from 2008 to 2011. He is fluent in French, English and Italian. In addition to his responsibilities as professor, Minister Lametti was a member of McGill University's Senate and a Governor of the Quebec's Bar. He was also a competitive soccer coach in two Montreal leagues for six years and a member and president of the governing board of his children's school. Minister Lametti holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science from the University of Toronto; a Bachelor of Civil Law and Bachelor of Laws from McGill University; a Master of Laws from Yale Law School; and a Doctor of Philosophy in Law from Oxford University. Prior to starting his doctoral studies in law, he served as a law clerk to Justice Peter deCarteret Cory of the Supreme Court of Canada. Minister Lametti served as a parliamentary secretary from 2015 until 2019, when he was appointed Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

Minister Lametti and his wife Geneviève have three children: André, Gabrielle, and Dominique.

Please, welcome, Canada's Attorney General and Minister of Justice, the Honourable David Lametti.

The Honourable David Lametti

Thank you so much for that kind and perhaps overly long welcome. I would like to begin by acknowledging that the land that we gather on today is the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Anishnabeg, the Haudenosaunee and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

Chief Justice Strathy, distinguished guests—I do not want to miss anyone else, so I am just going to leave it at distinguished guests, friends, and I am very moved by the number of old friends and new friends that are in the room from every stage of my life, from my home town all the way to my university studies. There are some of my former students here, at least one former research assistant here.

Thank you. Thanks to all of you for coming. What is the curse about living in interesting times? I will admit that the first few weeks on the job have been eventful, but I am proud to speak to you today as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. Again, I thank you for coming and for the warm welcome.

I know many of you have been following the news out of Ottawa, and I do want to spend some time on those issues today. First, though, I want to take a few minutes to tell you a bit about who I am and what I believe in. I think it is important for Canadians to understand the values and the considerations that will inform the way I approach my responsibilities in this role. That includes some serious questions that have arisen in my first weeks.

Growing up, it is safe to say that I never expected that one day I would become Canada's justice minister.

My parents were Italian immigrants. They were in their early twenties when they came to Canada shortly after the Second World War, far from their family and from everything familiar. They eventually settled in Port Colborne, Southwestern Ontario, which is where I was born.

Port Colborne, like lots of places, small towns in Ontario, has changed a lot since I was a kid. At the time, it was a small industrial town where families on my block had at least one person working at either one of the steel mills in the Niagara Peninsula, at the flour mill, or at the nickel refinery. My dad was a home builder. He died young, at the age of 49. My mother worked at a number of jobs as she raised me and my three older brothers on her own.

[Remarks in French.] Leur histoire témoigne de sacrifices générationnels. En effet, ils se sont sacrifiés pour que leurs enfants puissent avoir une vie meilleure que la leur.

Ils sont venus ici, convaincus que le Canada était un endroit où leurs sacrifices ne seraient pas vains.

They taught me the importance of hard work, getting an education, the values of inclusion and kindness, which instilled in me the conviction that there really is no contradiction between being a good person and a successful one.

I cannot overstate the gratitude I feel towards my parents for the opportunities that they made possible for me.

Not everyone is so lucky. I left home to go to the University of Toronto at St. Michael's College—table is over there—just up the way, just up University Ave. I loved my time at St. Mike's. It was special, even unique, to be studying politics in Canada at the time. Our Constitution was being patriated by Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government.

The debate was unfolding in front of me. As a student in my early twenties, I was witness to the pivot point in Canadian constitutional and legal history, and it was thrilling.

You can say that I am a child of the Charter. It was born as I was finding my way intellectually. As I watched the final signing ceremony on that windy day on Parliament Hill, I knew that our country had accomplished a great thing and was moving into a new era. For me the Charter was an affirmation of the many values that I had and held as I grew up.

Here was a document that affirmed that Canada was a place where each individual would have a right to pursue his or her version of the good life.

No matter where you came from or who you are, our collective aspiration is that you should have a right to the Charter's protections, including the right to make your voice heard. These rights should never be taken for granted.

The debates I have witnessed and the vision of what this country should be were a large part of the reason why I went to study law. After I graduated from the University of Toronto, I headed down the 401 to continue my studies in the law faculty at McGill University. It was a conscious choice that I made to study in a part of the country that I did not know well at the time and that spoke a different language. It was also the home of my favourite hockey team having grown up in Niagara as a Habs fan surrounded by Sabres and Leafs fans. I still find it hard to admit that the Leafs are a good hockey team.

[Remarks in French.] Les quatre années j'ai passées à McGill et l'année au cours de laquelle j'ai ensuite travaillé comme auxiliaire juridique à la Cour suprême du Canada n'ont fait que renforcer chez moi le désir de tirer parti des possibilités qui m'avaient été offertes et ainsi de mettre de l'avant les convictions dont j'ai parlé un peu plus tôt.

L'hors de mon passage à l'Université McGill, et dans la carde de mon travail a titre auxiliaire judicaire a la Cour Suprême du Canada de la fin de mes études universitaire,

j'ai rencontré deux de mes mentors : Rod MacDonald, président de la Commission du droit du Canada et doyen de la faculté de droit de l'Université McGill, et le juge Peter Cory, pour qui j'ai travaillé comme auxiliaire juridique.

These two exceptional men ***[Roderick Madonald and Peter Cory]*** were role models for me. They embodied a deeply ethical approach to the law and drummed into me the importance of equality as a central value of our justice system. They were also paragons of kindness. More than anything, though, what stood out with both of them was their absolute commitment to treating people around them with respect and giving these people the tools and freedom to grow and, once again, make their voices and ideas heard.

For the better part of two decades, I carried these values into my work as a professor in the Law Faculty at McGill.

I am proud to see many of my students rise to important jobs in the legal profession, including a few in my own office and around the caucus and cabinet table. The ones who have made me proudest, though, are the ones who have chosen to use the tools that a legal education provides to give back to their chosen communities. In doing so, they are recognizing the reality that not everyone has access to the kinds of opportunities that all Canadians deserve.

All of these experiences have not just given me a passion for the law; they have also reinforced the importance, for me, for living in a country where as Canadians, we can pursue our own version of the good life in all of the many forms that it takes. It is also these values that motivated me in my desire to run for public office. I loved teaching at McGill—do not get me wrong—but I am someone, one of many, who entered into politics in 2015 because I believed that the previous government undermined and, in some cases, actively threatened many of our core Canadian values that are reflected in the Charter of Rights and our independent courts.

I believe now, as I did then, that you cannot take anything for granted. There are forces in the world that would seek to undermine the values that we hold dear. As Canadians, we must actively work to ensure that these values continue to thrive.

Over the past four years, those are precisely the kinds of values and principles that Justin Trudeau and our government have fought for. We have provided progressive, forward-looking government that has not been afraid to embrace transformational change. That reality should not be forgotten amid the din of the current news cycle about which I would like to say a few words.

Three weeks ago, allegations began appearing in the Globe and Mail concerning ongoing proceedings involving SNC-Lavalin and the previous attorney general's interactions with the prime minister and others concerning those proceedings. Until Jody Wilson-Raybould's testimony yesterday, those allegations remained generally uncertain and based at least in part on anonymous accounts.

Nevertheless, by the time I appeared a week ago before the Standing Committee on Justice to speak to these issues, it had become clear that the Canadian public deserved the chance to understand the events at issue. It is, after all, a pillar of our democracy that Canadians have confidence in the proper administration and oversight of our justice system. As Attorney General, I believe it is my role to do everything that I can do to preserve this confidence. For that reason, in my testimony at the Committee, I committed to doing my part to provide Canadians with the transparency they deserve. At the same time, I insisted that any discussion should not undermine the rule of law, the right to a fair hearing in active cases and the integrity of the position of the director of public prosecutions. This meant any responsible review must account for the fact that SNC-Lavalin is currently engaged in two legal proceedings. In other words, despite the opposition's claims to the contrary, we must recognize that transparency can only happen if we approach the conversations in a considered and responsible manner.

How did our government respond? We took the exceptional step of removing all obstacles that would prevent a former attorney general from speaking to matters that occurred under her tenure, including waiving solicitor-client privilege and cabinet confidence. Without question, her testimony was an important step towards achieving transparency.

The Justice Committee and the ethics commissioner will move forward in this process, hearing the perspectives of various individuals. As they do so, I intend to maintain my commitment to transparency while ensuring the integrity of the rule of law.

[Remarks in French.] J'ai débuté mes remarques en essayant de décrire le genre de personne que je suis et les valeurs que j'ai définies.

Que ce soit dans les quartiers populaires de Port Colborne, en soutenant le juge Cory à la Cour suprême ou en aidant mes étudiants à explorer des idées nouvelles et complexes à la faculté de droit de McGill, je m'engage pour un Canada où nous pouvons débattre ouvertement nos vues dans le cadre de l'état de droit.

Whatever one's opinions on what is being said before the Standing Committee on Justice, the fact that important witnesses are being heard on a matter of significant public interest is a positive thing. Before I leave this particular topic, there is one more point I would like to make. The current news agenda has generated a great deal of commentary about the role of the attorney general, one of the two roles I perform as a member of cabinet in addition to being Minister of Justice. There is no person who is capable of doing these two jobs alone, whether that is the job of the attorney general, the prime minister or the clerk of the privy council.

In fact, just like the world outside politics, each of us is made stronger by talking to each other and coming to better understandings together. It is important to remember that while the attorney general sits at a certain distance from his or her cabinet colleagues, in Canada, unlike in other countries, he does not work in isolation from them or the important experiences or considerations that those colleagues bring to the table. I believe that these discussions can improve the quality of decision making. The attorney general is not an island, even in circumstances where a final decision rests with him or her.

There can be no question as to the significance of Canada's attorney general in safeguarding the rule of law, nor should we leave any doubt as to our government's commitment to the role that the attorney general must play.

I spoke earlier of our government's willingness to embrace change, and I believe we have a good story to tell on that score, despite what is in the news right now. I want to spend some time on what our government has done so far.

Our government passed legislation to create a legal framework for medical assistance in dying in response to the Supreme Court's decision in Carter. This issue is complex; it is emotional; and it is deeply, deeply personal.

Our legislation struck a balance between giving autonomy to those who seek medically assisted dying and still protecting the vulnerable.

[Remarks in French.] De plus, notre gouvernement a adopté la loi légalisant et réglementant strictement le cannabis. Le ciel ne nous est pas tombé sur la tête.

La légalisation incarne l'acceptation du Canada tel qu'elle est maintenant. S'il y a une initiative qui définit le changement transformationnel, c'est bien celui-là.

En même temps que nous avons légalisé le cannabis et avons assujetti sa consommation à une réglementation

stricte, nous avons adopté une loi visant à moderniser les lois canadiennes sur la conduite avec facultés affaiblies.

Ces changements ont été les plus importants dans ce domaine depuis la fin des années 1960. Non seulement rendront-ils nos routes plus sécuritaires, mais ils sauveront aussi des vies.

Nous avons mis à jour le droit en matière d'agression sexuelle pour la première fois depuis une génération, conformément à notre engagement à faire en sorte que les victimes d'agression sexuelle et de violence fondée sur le sexe soient traitées avec compassion et respect.

Ces changements clarifient et renforcent le droit en ce qui concerne le consentement, l'admissibilité de la preuve et la représentation juridique pour la victime qui dépose une plainte. Nous sommes déterminés à mener des consultations soutenues avec les intervenants à ce sujet.

For the first time in decades, we are proposing significant upgrades to family law to ensure they are squarely focused on promoting the best interests of the child. That legislation, Bill C-78, is now in the Senate. I will do everything in my power to get that bill over the finish line. I feel the same way about Bill C-75, our reforms to the criminal justice system designed to address court delays. This important legislation is also before the Senate, and I am looking forward to seeing it debated and passed. There are other legislative changes that speak to our values. We believe that Canadians should be free to be who they are. That inspired our government to pass ground-breaking legislation that adds gender identity and expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act. That same legislation also added gender identity and expression to the list of distinguishing characteristics of an "identifiable group" protected by the hate speech provisions of the Criminal Code.

[Remarks in French.] En tant que Montréalais originaire de l'Ontario, je voulais souligner une initiative qui revêt pour moi une très grande importance. Notre gouvernement a rétabli le Programme de contestation judiciaire, que le gouvernement précédent avait annulé.

We are not just working to transform and modernize our laws. We now have a process for appointing judges that is transparent, inclusive and accountable to Canadians.

At the Superior Court level, more than 260 judges have been appointed since November 2015. There are more coming soon. These exceptional jurists represent the diversity that strengthens Canada. Of these judges, 55% are women; eight are Indigenous; 22 are members of visible minority communities; 12 have self-identified as LGBTQ2S; and three have self-identified as having disabilities. These appointments underline our government's commitment to reshape the bench to better reflect Canada as it is today. ***[Remarks in French.] Le Canada est aujourd'hui un pays remarquable. Mais pour les peuples autochtones, le Canada d'aujourd'hui exige encore du travail. Beaucoup de travail. Notre gouvernement est déterminé à transformer en profondeur sa relation avec les peuples autochtones.***

Today, we have taken another important step in that journey towards reconciliation. This morning, my colleague, Minister Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Indigenous Services, introduced a new bill on Indigenous child and family services. This proposed legislation was co-developed with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners, and would affirm Indigenous peoples' inherent right to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services. It contains principles that would guide how services are delivered to Indigenous children in jurisdictions and regions of the country while aiming to reduce what my colleague, Jane Philpott, has described as a humanitarian crisis of our time, the number of Indigenous children in care. This is a groundbreaking bill, affirming a Section 35 right in legislation as opposed to waiting for a court to do it. I cannot overstate the importance.

My department, Justice Canada, has been doing its part as well to contribute to renewed Crown-Indigenous relationships based on rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. These include releasing the Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples and the attorney general's Directive on Civil Litigation Involving Indigenous Peoples.

There is so much more to do. It is a source of national shame that Indigenous people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, both as victims and offenders. The statistics are appalling. The rate of violent victimization among Indigenous people in Canada is more than double that of non-Indigenous people. The overall rate of violent victimization among Indigenous women is close to triple that of non-Indigenous women. These figures and the tragic reality that they illustrate are unacceptable and must change.

In practical terms, for my part, that means continuing to work with our Indigenous partners on bail reform, which is addressed in C-75. That legislation also tackles administration of justice offences. As many of us know, these offences can function as a vulnerable individual's entry into the revolving door of the criminal justice system. More broadly, I know that restorative justice is a priority for our Indigenous partners, and I want you to know that it is a priority for me as well. The goal of all of these measures is to transform how Indigenous peoples experience the criminal justice system. That is where we have been, where we are and where we are going.

At the heart of all of that policy rests a principled core that guides the work we do. Canadians must have confidence that their institutions act in the public interest. Those institutions must act as our necessary checks and balances. Public prosecutors must exercise their discretion independently and free from political or partisan consideration. Public servants must be free to provide fulsome and frank advice that is non-partisan in nature.

The conflict of interest and ethics commissioner must fulfill his independent role that was given to him by Parliament. Judicial independence must be safeguarded.

This is the essential vision of the country that I have defended and promoted through my working life, one informed by the places I have come from, by the people who have influenced me, and the fundamental laws which govern our great country.

It is a vision of Canada that I commit to doing my best to uphold for as long as I have the privilege of serving in this position.

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak today, and I look forward to taking some questions.

Questions & Answers

KE: Thank you so much. For the question period today, I am going to ask all of you to look at your tables.

There are cards on each table. I am going to ask individuals to fill them out. If you want to be anonymous, that is fine. If you want to put your name and your corporation, that would be also helpful.

I am going to kick it off, though. I am going to ask a question. We talked about how this is a challenging time. Given this opportunity to get to know you, how do you deal with challenging times, whether it is now or other times in your life when you have met challenges? What goes through your mind, and how do you personally deal with those kinds of things?

DL: Thank you for the question first of all. It seems easy, but it is harder than it looks. I try to go back to the things I alluded to in my speech: The values my parents taught me; the values that I learned from people like Rod Macdonald and Peter Cory; my family.

And my kids are sometimes the best sounding point for what might be right or wrong. I also turn to my wife, obviously; my faith, I am a person of faith, but quietly so; and all of these things; and the principles that have been inculcated in me throughout, which a number of you share, because you have been at those institutions and places with me. You go back to that all the time.

You use it as your North Star. I will add one last thing. Duncan Boswell will smile when I say this, but we learned about kindness from Peter Cory, and we learned about having a sense of humour and the value of a good cookie at an appropriate moment in discussing a difficult point. I think I learned from Justice Cory to treat the people who you work with respectfully and kindly. When it gets tough—and we have had some tough days; I see members of my team around the room—being surrounded by people whom you like and with whom you like to work and whom you trust and who are kind to you and to whom you are kind in return, is fundamental, absolutely fundamental.

KE: That is a great answer. Thank you for that. I have a question here. This is from Colin Stevenson. In light of recent events, is it time to split the office of AG and the Minister of Justice? That is a good question.

DL: It is a good question. You may have read the op-ed piece by my friend, Adam Dodek, in the Globe and Mail about a week ago, roughly, maybe a few days, a few less. We have not done that in Canada. The two roles are distinct. As you know, the attorney general has a more neutral role, if you will, in providing legal counsel to the government. I have done a fair bit of that in the last week and in overseeing elements of the judiciary. The minister of justice is the person who takes care of the administration of justice and is, in a sense, more of a political actor as a full member—they are both full members of cabinet, but ***[the attorney general is]*** a member of cabinet, part of the cabinet decision-making process. We have chosen in Canada not to split the two. The obvious comparator is the UK where the attorney general is not a full member of cabinet, in a sense, and has a more independent status. We have a prosecution service in Canada, to which we have delegated authority for prosecutions in order to maintain the independence of that office. There is a law that many of you are learning about very quickly over the course of the past week, in which the parameters of that delegation or the parameters in which that delegation may be overridden or 'directed', for a better word. They are there, and it is meant to preserve the independence of that function.

In a sense, we have responded, in part, by hiving off the prosecution service and giving it an independence status. That being said, there are challenges, and you have to try to distinguish your hats and know when you are wearing your minister of justice hat or when you have to put on your attorney general hat. One thing that is uncontested in all of the testimony you have heard so far over the past week is nobody has questioned the ultimate right of the attorney general to be a final decision-maker on certain kinds of issues. There are other associated questions about the kinds of discussions that might go into informing that, but we all agree the attorney general has that role. There are good arguments to split it. There is also 150 years of the position working in Canada.

The kinds of issues we have seen this week do not happen all the time. Maybe that is indicative that the system can work.

KE: Will you be addressing the mandatory minimums, some of which have been ruled unconstitutional?

These were not addressed in Bill C-75 and add to court time. This is from Lori Anne Thomas.

DL: Thank you, Lori Anne. As part of my mandate, moving forward, I do plan to look at mandatory minimums. I cannot promise an outcome just yet, but my predecessor promised that when they were not included in

C-75, she would move forward with them, and I intend to respect that. I think it is important to look at that. And, obviously, the Supreme Court has given us a number of different indicia of how we ought to move forward.

KE: Thank you so much, Minister. I would like to ask Harry from Gowling to come up and give the thank to the minister. Thank you, Harry, for coming to the stage.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Harry Dahme, Partner, Gowling WLG

I and sort of debating in the context of the events of the last week what we could say to thank David for coming today. What I was sort of reminded of was through his introductory remarks how many of the politicians that we have, enter politics for the reason of doing the right thing, that they are motivated by doing the right thing and that is really what they want to achieve throughout their public career.

I think what you have heard today from David is that he is still motivated by that. That is what is guiding his decisions as attorney general. I think we should thank David for his commitment to doing that. If you could please join me in thanking David for all of that.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

We have a number of events coming up, ladies and gentlemen. We have the Women's Day Panel on March 5th, featuring the Honourable Mary Ng.

We have Mayor John Tory on March 20th, and we have confirmed the Honourable Vid Fedeli on March 28th—many events coming up. Check our website.

I appreciate everyone coming today. For our sponsors, again, Waste Connections and Fasken, thank you, again.

Ladies and gentlemen, the meeting is adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PANEL: WOMEN WHO LEAD WITH JAKE STIKA

***FROM:* NEXT-GENERATION MEN**

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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March 5, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Omni King Edward Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the meeting. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting. Today we present "The International Women's Day Panel: Women Who Lead." I am very proud to celebrate this occasion with all of you.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Ms. Jessica Johnson, Executive Editor and Creative Director, The Walrus
The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, Government of Canada

Ms. Farah Qasemi, Vice President, Business Development Banking and Capital Markets, KPMG Canada

Ms. Vicki Saunders, Founder, SheEO
Mr. Jake Stika, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Next Gen Men

Guests:

Ms. Megan Boyle, Director Public Affairs, Red Bull Canada; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Emily Emerson, Manager, Financial Services Policy Division, Ontario Ministry of Finance

Mr. Chandran Fernando, Managing Partner, Matrix360
Ms. Jenna Hay, Head of Policy Development and Regulatory Affairs, Lending Loop; Director, Empire Club of Canada

International Women's Day, coming up on March 8th, is very important to me and to the Empire Club, so much so, that we have dedicated ourselves to holding this event annually. In the spirit of the occasion, I am going to call Jenna Hay, one of our directors, up here in just a minute to give some contextual remarks.

Before I do this, I would like to do a couple of things. First, I would like to thank Megan Boyle for organizing this event, for being the lead on it.

The second thing is I want to talk about a changemaker. The Empire Club, having a vintage as long as we have, has required changemakers here. We have a Past President who was the first woman president in 1984. Madam Past President, thank you for coming today. I would like everyone to congratulate Catherine Charlton. I know she is here somewhere. I am looking for her. We want to say thank you—first woman president of the Empire Club of Canada!

Lastly, I wanted to pay some respect to this Baroness von Sketch Show, a little CBC show that you guys might know. They take a critical approach and a hilarious view of some workplace issues. This is a little sketch of job promotion.

I am going to ask you to take a look at this. It is hilarious. Roll them.

[VIDEO.] Promotion Skit from CBC's Baroness Von Sketch, (Season 3, Episode 5, Because I Care)

That video speaks for itself. I would like to invite Jenna Hay up here to say a bit more. Thank you.

Introduction, by Ms. Jenna Hay, Head of Policy Development and Regulatory Affairs, Lending Loop; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Baroness von Sketch is a bit of a tough act to follow.

Thank you, Kent, and thank you all for being here, today. For this event, we carefully selected a panel of women who are leaders in a variety of ways. Women who have not just achieved success in their respective fields, but who have brought and continue to bring important issues to light and who work to create positive change. We are gathered to not only celebrate International Women's Day, but also to continue meaningful conversations about women's advancement, be it social, corporate, economic in nature.

These conversations matter greatly. For one, they help us identify what works or what does not. Perhaps, most importantly, they help us better understand what is missing or what has yet to be done as we work towards gender equality. One of the best tools we have at our disposal is data. When we look at the data behind women's economic advancement, things may seem a bit grim. Take, for example, women's representation on corporate boards.

The recently released 2018 Spencer Stuart Board Index identified that 30% of all non-executive director appointments were women, a 10% decline from 2017 where it was: 40%. Last September, the Canadian Securities Administrators released their fourth report on women on boards in an executive position. The total percentage of board seats occupied by women was 15%. Four years before, it was 11%.

Actually, I should note, just for a moment, that I am very pleased to serve on the board of the Empire Club that has 40% representation by women, and strong leadership at the helm is identified by Catherine Charlton our past president.

Back to the numbers. They are trending upward but at a glacial pace. If these stats do not do it for you, we can replay that clip again.

The numbers found in these reports are important, because they hold a mirror up to our attitudes and to our decision-making. They also help hold individuals and groups accountable for that decision-making.

At their core, they raise an increasingly salient and, at times, difficult question: Does what we do work?

Should we do things differently? When we discuss women's corporate or economic advancement, we often talk about the need to get more women into certain systems, often ones that have traditionally been unwelcoming.

We talk about the need to get more women into STEM or more women on boards. These are important conversations to have, but if we do not approach the how of it with a critical lens, we may miss the opportunity to effectively create structures and systems that are truly more inclusive of women. I will use a personal example. I work in fintech and much of the policy work that I undertake focuses on better understanding the challenges faced by women business owners who are accessing capital. Throughout our examination of the issue, we have returned to the question time and time again of whether or not we need to change the way that women access capital, providing them with a different kind of system that works for them rather than just relying on traditional methods. I, like many others, continually face the challenge of figuring out a real solution to this real problem.

When we examine the issues that women encounter, we must remember that long-established systems and structures often disadvantage women. Negative views of women are imbedded in our culture and are the status quo of many of our workplaces. This is why we must tackle these issues with ingenuity, creativity and resilience. It is no easy feat, but taking this approach can yield great, lasting results.

Thankfully, for all of us, we have four panelists who are ready to engage us in meaningful and critical conversation about how we achieve those results.

As our panelists share their opinions on the advancement of women's equality, I look forward to being challenged on the way I think about and approach the issues women face. Judging by this jam-packed room, I would venture to guess that all of you do, too. Thank you very much.

Introduction to Panelists, by Kent Emerson

Let us get started. We are going to get started with the moderator today, who is a passionate speaker and facilitator focused on gender-based issues related to the social and emotional development of boys, the health and wellbeing of men as well as diversity and inclusion. His work at Next Gen Men, a nonprofit promoting positive masculinities, healthy relationships and gender equity in schools, communities, and workplaces has impacted the lives of men and boys and those they touch across Canada.

Recently named one of Avenue Magazine's "Top 40 Under 40," as well as having earned recognition from Ashoka, the British Council and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, Jake has also spoken at the United Nations as part of the Canadian delegation and participated in the UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Leaders' Forum. Please, welcome to the stage the Executive Director and Co-founder of Next Gen Men, Jake Stika.

A frequent writer on women's issues, she has contributed to a number of publications across North America, including The Walrus, The New Republic, Lucky, Toronto Life, Reader's Digest and enRoute. She has also held senior level editing positions at The Globe and Mail, Saturday Night, Azure and Fashion Quarterly. From 2009 to 2015 she was the head copywriter behind the successful transformation of Hudson's Bay, Canada's iconic department store.

Jessica is an alumnus of the University of British Columbia's Creative Writing program.

Please, welcome the Executive Editor and Creative Director of The Walrus, Jessica Johnson.

Our next guest was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Markham—Thornhill in April 2017 and was appointed Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion in July 2018. Throughout her 20 years of public service, Minister Ng has been a passionate community leader and advocate with a proven track record of results in the areas of education, women's leadership, job creation, and entrepreneurship.

Prior to serving as a Member of Parliament, she has worked as Director of Appointments in the Prime Minister's Office. She also served as the Director of Policy in provincial education where she built relationships, negotiated with teachers' unions, and served students while helping to improve Ontario's education system. Minister Ng also served in the president's office at Ryerson University, helping to shape new initiatives that connected students and their innovative ideas with businesses and creating quality jobs for young Canadians. She has been a speaker and panelist on topics ranging from business, innovation, women in leadership and Canada-China relations. Please, welcome the MPP for Markham–Thornhill and Canada's Minister of Small Business, the Honourable Mary Ng. Our next guest is the senior executive in charge of ensuring significant growth in KPMG's practice by bringing the best of KPMG's people, intellectual capital, alliances and assets from around the world to Canada's largest banks. She has focused strictly on the financial services sector for over a decade and has established a niche in developing greenfield big-bank targets (primarily, Global Systemically Important Banks, or G-SIBs) for the world's leading technology and professional services firms. Before KPMG Canada in 2015, she held leadership roles at CSC UK, PwC UK and PwC Canada. She sat on the United Way of Toronto's Campaign Cabinet and GenNext for two years prior to leaving Toronto in 2012 and is very passionate about women empowerment and leadership, having spoken at length on this topic at industry events on Bay Street and beyond. She is a proud member of the Ascend Canada board of directors. Please, welcome the Vice President of Business Development for KPMG Canada's Banking & Capital Markets practice, Farah Qasemi. Our final guest is the Founder of #radical generosity and SheEO, a network-based, ecosystem approach to selecting, funding, supporting and scaling women-led ventures, building new models, new mindsets and new solutions for a better world. Vicki has co-founded and run ventures in Europe, Toronto and Silicon Valley and has taken a company public on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

Vicki was recently named one of the 100 most influential leaders of 2015 from "EBW—Empowering a Billion Women." In 2001, Vicki was selected as a Global Leader for Tomorrow by the World Economic Forum. Please, welcome entrepreneur, award-winning mentor, advisor to the next generation of changemakers, Vicki Saunders.

Women Who Lead Panel with Moderator Mr. Jake Stika

JS: Awesome. Welcome.

We have a tough task ahead of us. We have to squeeze in a lot of really great conversation in 30 minutes.

We are going to try to do that. I am really honoured to be part of this panel because oftentimes people ask me what is something that men can do, as an action, to further women and advance gender equality. I say we should go on a listening tour. We should ask 10, 20, however many women in our lives that we care about what their experiences are in the workplace, their experiences with street harassment, and we will quickly come to find that the threads are the same throughout the stories, and we will build empathy from that. Hopefully, we can hear some of your stories today. Low-ball: What does International Women's Day mean to you? We will start at the far end with Vicki.

VS: I have a love and yet deep dislike of this day and this week. On the one hand, it is amazing that organizations like yourself, the media, most corporations do a lot of work this week finding women, putting them on stage, putting them on the news, writing about them in the media. That is awesome.

Also, it just shines a light on the rest of the year when that is not a priority, and you can just see how imbalanced we are. Yes, to modeling the behaviour and boo to the fact that it is not much more scaled out.

FQ: International Women's Day is very, very personal, to me. As an ambitious woman, as someone who works in an industry that can be traditionally male dominated, as a mom, as a self-made immigrant, as someone who does not work regular hours, as someone who is literally the only woman sometimes in meetings that I attend and who is younger by a decade, to this day, I still work extra hard to get taken seriously. That is not uncommon, according to the World Economic Forum.

Regardless of what we do, today, it is going to take us about 100 years to close the gender pay gap. This is a real and tangible issue. To Vicki's point, regardless of forums like this, I can see despite that, there is a lot of work that still needs to be done. I am quite passionate about this week. I wish every week was IWD week. At firms like mine, for example, KPMG, in accounting, when it comes to university intakes, we take in more than 50% women. In our industry, accounting as a whole, something happens between graduation and partnership where that percentage just nosedives. We are one of the industry leaders, and we are currently at 28% female partners. When I look at the world I live in, there is so much work that we still have to do. I am a very, very big promoter of it.

JS: Oftentimes, we focus a bit too much on the "pipeline" issue, but we do not really look at the retention piece. I partnered with a woman in Vancouver who works in coaching women in male-dominated industries.
She has a brilliant graph that shows general attrition rates, and it is something like10%–15%.

Then, she works in the STEM field, and it is something like 60%. She says woman in STEM are not having six times more babies, so what is the issue there? We have to look at the culture piece.

MN: Following a little bit of what both Farah and Vicki said, I love this week. I hope it does not take 100 years to close the pay gap. We make 88¢ to the dollar right now, women to men. We have put legislation forth that actually will close that. Let us hope that it is not 100 years. I would say, just to add to another statistic, a week like this gives me the opportunity to talk about it, but it also gives me an opportunity to talk about all the things that we are doing to try to solve it. I have a mandate to double the number of women entrepreneurs by 2025. Here is the number. It is 16% today that there are women-led or women-owned entrepreneurs in Canada. Ninety-nine percent of our businesses in this country are small- and medium-sized businesses, and it is only 16%. It should not take 100 years to close that gap. I am going to double the number of female entrepreneurs by 2025.

JJ: I might speak for a lot of people in the room when I say growing up, I imagined equality is being a state where my gender was no longer an issue. I wanted the same opportunities as men, the same jobs. I always thought I would make the same amount as men. It was quite a shock to discover that I would not. Now, I am in my forties. It is a bit of a surprise to be still actually fighting it more than ever. I have realized that the role for someone like me is to be an advocate for other women, for other minorities. I think this day, a bit of a hallmark holiday, is actually extremely important in just making these issues apparent.

JS: Yes, a level of visibility, for sure. Moving away from the day, the week itself, what, as individuals are you most proud of to get to where you are sitting today and moving forward, as well? Maybe we will go back the other direction, now.

JJ: At The Walrus, we have talked a lot about inclusion, and we see gender not in isolation of race and ability and all kinds of other things. When I first started, women were a minority at The Walrus. It was really hard to get stories by and about women through the magazine. That was just the culture. No one was really standing in my way saying you could not, but it had always been a boys' club. I formed a secret group of women on a team. This was important. There were only two or three of us at the beginning.

We worked on stories and ideas so that we would learn how to present them in a way that men accepted them. I would often leave the gender of the subject out until the very end of a pitch. Then, I would actually use methods much like that lady in the Baroness von Sketch Show adding stuff—you know just trying to speak the language of the other side.

JS: I would like to nominate someone who did this, this, this. We are nodding and then, yes, absolutely.

JJ: Won a Nobel.

MN: I think representation matters. When I ran for office—I would say that today, I have a better sense of why representation matters so much. I will share with you a little story. On the weekend I was with about 100 young people, high school students. They gave me a question. The question was What advice would you give to your 15-year-old self? I really had to think long and hard about what my answer was going to be.

My answer to them was I need you to love more, to be compassionate more, and I need you to fight for what you believe in because you are going to have to have a fight. My 15-year-old self did not have the challenges that they have today. They have climate change facing them. I asked the question How many of you think it is important? Imagine every single one of you put your hands up, because that is what happened in that room. Imagine that when they go on to social media, the dialogue that is happening there, today, causes a lot of confusion about what they need to do to take their place, their ownership. In that room, it was three quarters women. That room of high school students were young people learning how to create pitches so that they can get the skills they need to create the enterprise that they want to be a part of, the society they want to create. Representation, I am learning week by week, year by year, representation absolutely matters.

Look at the panel that you have here of the women. Thank you for your work because I am part of a team and a cabinet that is made up of 50% women and 50% men. The dialogue and the conversations and the decision-making that takes place at that table is so much more robust and enriching for our country because we have the 50/50. Representation really matters.

JS: Absolutely. We all have a role to play on International Women's Day.

FQ: I struggled with this question quite a bit when I was thinking about it this morning. It just tells you how statistically women just do not toot their own horns.

Looking back with a caveat, it is really because of the big village around me, but what I—and I know billions of people before me have done it—am most proud of, and I really still get goosebumps over it, is the fact that the most successful, most accomplished years of my career have been the two years when I was pregnant and I was a new mother. I am so thankful to my colleagues, my clients and people I work with and my family, my friends and my village that they supported me. I still have vivid memories of one hand nursing and the other hand negotiating an eight-figure deal on my laptop while on the phone at my kitchen counter at 10:00 p.m. on a Tuesday night. I think we women are capable of crazy things. I just wish we would just celebrate ourselves and each other a bit more.

JS: Mothers are superhumans. I think when we are flipping through résumés, mothers should definitely be on there, and that is an asset, not a liability.

VS: What I am most proud of is that part of SheEO which is focused on diversity. It is really, really important to me. Four percent of capital goes to women entrepreneurs and 0.1%, if you are a woman of colour, which is insane. Forty percent of the founders that we have funded, so far with SheEO, are women of colour.

I want that number to be higher. It is extremely important. The racial diversity piece is a huge part of it. Yes, absolutely. Also, diversity of age and of stage. We have activators in our network who are women who contribute $1,100. How many activators are here, by the way? Yay, thank you to all of you.

Activators range in age, at the moment, from 14 to 94. We have mothers, daughters and grandmothers in funding the kinds of companies that create a better world. I am with you on the doubling the numbers.

Let us do that. Also, regional diversity. We are coast to coast, so there is a real focus on the fact that you cannot build a new world with just the same people who built this one.

If you want to get to a better place, you need to have everyone at the table and to really create a big tent. Part of the challenge with that when you have a very, very diverse group is there is just a lot of different perspectives. It is way easier to go build a niche kind of thing, but then you get the same kind of world we have got. How do you get all those voices together and create space for everyone to share their diverse perspectives? That is something that is really important to me.

JS: I believe there is a proverb, and it is, "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

The going alone is when you have a bunch of yes-people, and they are just agreeing because there is a lack of diversity. When we get those people who are challenging us, who are putting our ideas through the ringer, the end product is always better. Now, looking forward, we have marked the day; we have marked what we are proud of. What is a lesson that we can leave this room with that we need to focus on, something tangible, moving forward? I feel weird because we went this way and then that way. We will go with Farah this time. We will mix it up.

FQ: I will talk about two things. Number one—and this is so important—is to ask for sponsors not mentors.

Mentors are important; they coach you, and they nudge you, but they stay in the background, whereas sponsors are the ones who become your public cheerleaders, and they make it their life mission to get you promoted. That is why the old boys' clubs work, and we do not have those. I am a very, very big believer of that. Secondly—and there is a lot of research behind it, I know, as I was looking at some of the research we at KPMG have done in this area—take risks.

My husband and I—he is sitting there—moved across the Atlantic not once, but twice, for a complete unknown. I am the exception. I am not the norm.

I was looking at some stats according to some work we did in this field. There are actually fewer than four in ten women are open to taking big risks that maybe associated with career advancement. This is where it gets interesting. Their inclination to take risk actually declines as they get more experienced and more confident. If any of you have been mansplained to, you would know that problem does not exist in men.

It is actually a woman thing. If I could leave you with two lessons, those are the two things that have really worked for me.

I am constantly telling myself to do that. It does not come naturally, but we have to.

JS: If I could just piggyback maybe a little bit on this sponsorship piece, I doubt there are any men in this room that would avoid being alone with a woman, but that is something that is coming up right now. My challenge to those individuals—and if you are in a room and you can challenge those individuals—is why would you feel that way? Do you not trust yourself? If you do not trust yourself, you have to ask what kind of society and culture we are living in that we do not trust men left alone with women. That would be my piggyback to the sponsorship piece. What about yourself, Jessica?

JJ: One thing that we are doing in media is looking at expertise and the notion of who gets to be an expert.

I have two editors on our team that have electively decided from now on that half the experts in a story have to be female. It is really radical when you look at who the doctors, lawyers, scientists are that are being quoted on record as being experts. In the case of science, it is extremely interesting because that in turn, will affect their funding, their tenure, all of these other kinds of things. To me, that is a no-brainer. Obviously, we do not have a problem with that on this panel, but, now, especially if I am asked to speak, I try to make sure there is a good gender/race representation in the crowd. Who people see is who they believe. Until we can change that, we will probably be on the sidelines.

VS: I think I am just going to ask a question. How many people in this room would help someone if they asked them right now? Okay, cool. How many people like asking for help? Right, so this is a really deep insight.

I think we have created environments where it is not that safe to ask for help, and in particular, women.

We are in a lot of unsafe environments, so saying you do not know how to do something is not safe in a lot of places. This is something we focus on a lot with SheEO, namely, creating a space of radical generosity.

It is an environment: Imagine if you are surrounded by radically generous people. How would that shift how you act? This is an underlying value system and core that I think we really need to focus on.

Minister Ng mentioned this earlier: If we were in more loving environments, we would all reach our potential, but being in these environments that are just not safe to get support and ask is a really big problem, and it holds so many of us back. Redesigning and being nicer to each other—I learned this literally from my mother—is important. Generosity was underneath everything. I grew up in a family full of boys, and I thought, "How am I going to create this initiative that is called 'generosity' when everyone is like, womp womp?"

I was generous today; great, way to go, Vick! It is not like I nailed it; I crushed it. We do not have power words for being nice. None. We need new language for that. I just plunked radical in front of it: 'Radical generosity'. It is a bit cooler. I am radically generous. What is that? Again, it is like we have to create new language to create new behaviours. This for me is something that we are really experimenting with.

JS: We should all be badass-kind people.

VS: Yes, goodass kind.

MN: I talked earlier about this awesome mandate to double the women entrepreneurs. Investments alone will not get us to successful entrepreneurs. Affordable childcare will help; changing parental leave rules so that a woman in a family can decide with her partner to share some of that domestic work so that he and she can make the decision so that she can keep running her company will help; then, she can continue to be promoted.

Having legislation—we just heard statistics earlier about the number of women on boards and in senior management, so a piece of legislation out there that is going to require boards that are federally regulated to disclose the makeup of gender as well as diversity on their boards will be helpful. Representation is going to matter. That disclosure and that transparency are going to matter. I would say that they hold us accountable because the policies and the social policies that we have put in place work hand in hand in partnership with the financial investments that we are making, that the private sector is making.

But having just the one without the other will not get us the results that we are looking for. We are looking for participation. Here is the ROI for everyone to consider. This government has the first women's entrepreneurship strategy. It is a $2-billion investment.

I have a mandate to double the number of women entrepreneurs by 2025. If I do that, studies like that issued by McKinsey, tell us that we can add up to $150 billion to the Canadian GDP. Those financial people here in the room, do you not think that is a good ROI for women's economic empowerment? I do.

JS: I can keep going forever, but we only have a few more minutes. You came to this lunch because you want to take something away from this as well, too.

I believe we have one or two roving microphones. When you do ask a question, please, target it at a member of the panel just for timing's sake as well, too. If you have a question, feel free to raise your hand.

MN: This cannot be a shy room.

JS: Really, no questions? We have one over here and then another one over here after.

Q: Hi. Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts with us. I found it quite interesting what you have talked about. This question goes to Jessica, since you are related to communications. I heard something interesting about something called the 'Cassandra Curse', which is related to the issues that we are having when we are trying to express an idea, to share a particular idea with someone.

There are three problems that we usually have in order to convince someone that they should do something. Number one is that we talk in a language that they do not understand; number two is that they do not relate to us; and number three is

that the changes that we are actually asking them are too much for them to handle. Based on these particular three points and based on your own experience when you are trying to deal with initiatives that support women, what are the challenges that you are actually having when you are trying to communicate this to others and change their behaviour?

JJ: That is a really good question. It reminds me more of my time working in corporate culture than in the media. Journalism is emotional labour, in the sense that if you have ever been interviewed here, you know that we are actually pretty good at putting all the cards on the table. I think in corporate culture, it is different.

I am curious to hear what some of my other colleagues think. This is probably not the direct answer to your question, but I realize that I was taken much more seriously when I told everyone I was getting an MBA. I just got treated differently. I do not think it is what we are saying. I think it is a perception issue in our culture.

JS: I am a tall, white male. They are all proxies for expertise, and I often share the stage with women who have PhDs. It is an honour to do that, but we need to change that paradigm as well, too. Does anyone else have anything to offer to that question?

Q: Great panel. Thank you very much. Michelle Albanese with TD Bank. I run our Responsible Sourcing and Supplier Diversity programs at the bank.

I guess I have a question for Minister Mary Ng. Corporations are really taking the charge and leading the way when it comes to supplier diversity, which means using suppliers who are women-owned businesses, minority, LGBT, Indigenous, veterans and disabled suppliers. I just wanted to know what the government was doing around this type of procurement. You can call it 'social procurement' as well, but I am wondering whether either federally and also provincially there has been any progress with government using suppliers who are also minorities.

MN: That is a great question. Yes, I have two answers to that. Number one: Government needs to be that customer. Government needs to create that supply chain, be a part of that supply chain where we are procuring from SMEs and particularly from Canadian SMEs, and Canadian SMEs that are women-owned, Indigenous-owned, owned by the different diverse groups in Canada. We are absolutely doing that. We have a program called—I apologize, because it is the government, so it is an acronym—BCIP. It is the Buyer in Canadia Program. We have that. The second thing I would say is that Canada has access to $1.5 billion customers worldwide through the free trade agreements that we have negotiated. Through the European Union, through CETA with the Pacific Rim nations like Australia, Singapore, Japan and 12 other nations through the CPTPP and, of course—give it out to my colleague, Chrystia Freeland for bringing home—NAFTA.

MN: Canada has access to 60% of the world's economy through 12 trade agreements. We have access to these great markets, but in these free trade agreements, in particular, the CPTPP, CETA, the new NAFTA as well, there are chapters in there. There are chapters dedicated to SMEs to give our Canadian companies preferential access.

I am very excited to work on—my title is 'Minister of Small Business and Expert Promotion', and the expert promotion side is about helping Canadian companies, female entrepreneurs, become more export ready, so that we can grow.

We can grow domestically, but we can grow into those international markets because there is not a company that I have met, an entrepreneur that I have met, that does not want access to customers. And there are 1.5 billion of them worldwide, and our Canadian companies, our female entrepreneurs should get a piece of that business.

JS: We have time for one more question.

Q: My question is for Minister Ng. Amy Solomon from Neighbourhood Pharmacy. It is great to see you.

Right now in Canada there are 40,000 pharmacists. It is Pharmacist Awareness Month, and you should see your pharmacist. There are 10,500 pharmacies, and 60% of pharmacists are actually women, so we are helping you in your cause. Certainly, I hope that you have visited your local pharmacist.

MN: I have. As recent as the flu shot, locally.

Q: That is great. They can do more, obviously. Congratulations on your nomination this weekend.

MN: Thank you.

Q: I think what I would say is pharmacists are your partners in building that constructive economy, but also creating that capacity within the public healthcare system beyond hospitals in terms of alleviating the wait times. That provision of services needs to be considered.

When we consider things like pharmacare and other policies, we do need to consider how we make healthcare affordable for all, but also accessible in terms of the services—when and where they need them. As a single mom who runs into the pharmacy

to get those flu shots—and I have done it for the last seven years, long before I was at Neighbourhood—it is a great service and a great access point. I would encourage you to visit your pharmacy and think about the policies I think you put out there; childcare as well.

I am going to put my personal hat on and say I hope that we make some progress towards that because it certainly will encourage more women in the workforce and just remove a barrier that is so important and critical for women in terms of working. Thank you.

MN: Yes, I agree with you. Pharmacy Awareness Month—let us plug that. That was great.

Part of my title is about promotion for small businesses.

JS: Minister of Humblebrag. I think I have to hand it over here. We are running, hopefully, on time.

KE: This was a fantastic panel. I would like to bring up our sponsor to thank the panel today. Welcome Chandran Fernando of Matrix360, and thank you, again, for sponsoring this event.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Chandran Fernando, Managing Partner, Matrix360

Good afternoon. My name is Chandran Fernando of Matrix360. I am the Managing Partner for Matrix360.

We are an advisory platform that specializes in the talent management and workplace strategy for the private sector, specifically, for the commercial real estate and development industry.

We are very intentional with our lens of our approach. Our focus is diversity, equity and belonging in the industry. We connect the awareness to the how, because that is very important.

I would really like to thank the Empire Club again and the board of directors for hosting another important conversation this afternoon, and, on top of it, the panelists for you all to share your knowledge, your wisdom and your perspectives. It is not just about the showcasing, but it is the how-to, and that is very important. Thank you, again.

As an advocate and partner for equity and belonging, I strongly believe we must not only celebrate and have conversations one time out of the year, but conversations that lead to actions to the how such that equity is truly establishing in our workplaces, our homes and our society.

As a gay man, as a person who was born outside of Canada—so I am an immigrant—a person of colour, and some may say I am young, which I will take, and, most importantly, a business leader, I must take this opportunity to use my voice of influence to disrupt and educate and build a stronger society where the intersectionality of women and men are embraced, showcased and advanced.

Today, the world is becoming more polarized, as we could see, and it is all divided based on factors that breed fear, bigotry, lack of accountability, ignorance and hate.

As Canadians, we have the opportunity to lead the way towards reconciliation and equity for all. After all, today's theme at the International Women's Day for 2019, is one thing: Balance for Better. As we celebrate today and the rest of the week, and hopefully 365 days of the year and then some, let us truly live in our everyday action for balance for better. I do thank you for your attendance.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

I do want to take this moment also to recognize a young woman who has done a lot of work with me over the last months.

I want to recognize Marie, who has got a promotion and she is leaving the Empire Club as our Events Manager.

She has, since September, run 22 events. Thank you, Marie, and congratulations on your new role.

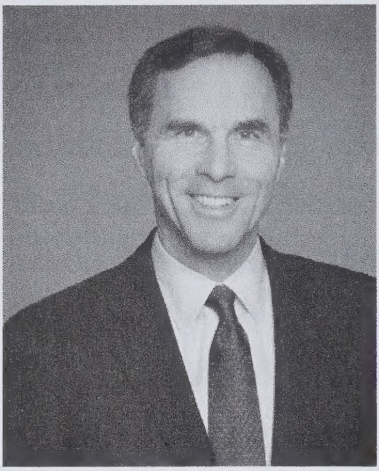
I want to recognize our Executive Director, Jehan, who has come back from maternity leave. Today is her first day back. I want to congratulate Bill, who has run things well in her absence. Thank you. This is our Empire Club team. Thank you very much.

We are at the forefront. Today is a great example of that. We are looking for events all the time. We are dedicated to being at the forefront. Last week, we had David Lametti, our Attorney General. We have the finance minister coming, federally, on the 20th in partnership with the Toronto Board of Trade and the Canadian Club. We have the mayor of Toronto coming on March 20th. We have Ontario's finance minister coming on March 28th and a whole bunch more this season.

Thank you for coming today. I really appreciate your support of our events. Thanks, again, to Matrix360 and Spencer Stuart for being sponsors. Thanks to the Minister and all our panelists, and Jake, for running this. This has been a great event.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club, The Canadian Club, and The Toronto Board of Trade Presents



THE HONOURABLE BILL MORNEAU

CANADA'S MINISTER
OF FINANCE:

POST-BUDGET BREAKFAST BRIEFING

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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March 20, 2019

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. From the Hilton Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to today's event.

For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting. A quick program note. For questions today, we will be circulating question cards from the audience. You will find a few question cards on each table. Volunteers will come around to collect them towards the end of the sit-down portion of the event. The Minister will speak and then Jan will be doing an interview with the Minister. Today we present the Honourable Bill Morneau, Canada's Minister of Finance, on the day after the federal budget.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

The Honourable Bill Morneau, Canada's Minister of Finance

Guests:

Mr. Charles Brindamour, Chief Executive Officer, Intact Financial Group

Mr. Patrick Dalzell, Director, Government and Stakeholder Relations – Corporate Affairs, Bruce Power

Ms. Jan De Silva, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Mr. Andrew Graham, President, Canadian Club; Chief Executive Officer, Borrowell

Ms. Mona Malone, Deputy Head Human Resources and Chief Talent Officer, BMO Financial Group

Ms. Nancy McCain, Chair, Arts Access Fund

Mr. Tony Pampena, Tax Partner, Ernst & Young

Mr. Rob Vanderhooft, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Investment Officer, TD Greystone Managed Investments

Ms. Madeline Zito, Vice President, Public Relations, Great Gulf

It is not often that we have a joint meeting of the Empire Club of Canada, the Canadian Club and the Toronto Board of Trade. It is not the first time we have done this. It is only reserved for the most important events that have happened throughout history. The first event I could find where this had happened is Winston Churchill in 1930 and Diefenbaker in 1956. Clearly, Minister Morneau, you are amongst good company. This event, today, marks the fourth budget delivered in the House of Commons yesterday. It is not lost on anyone how extremely important this budget is because it is the budget before the upcoming election. As we know from yesterday's budget, Minister Morneau is focused on many important themes, such as women's entrepreneurship and workplace equity, future skills development, housing affordability and the role of science in the economy.

When you think of Minister Morneau's work prior to becoming a minister, whether at Morneau Sheppell, a firm he grew from 200 employees to 4,000—the largest firm of any kind in Canada—or his volunteer in charity work prior at Covenant House, at St. Michael's Hospital, the budget seems like a continuation of the path he embarked on many years ago, a journey to improve the lives of everyday Canadians. His is the Member of Parliament for Toronto Centre and an accomplished business leader. As Minister, he has played a key role in shaping government policy and initiatives, including the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit, tax cuts for the middle class and small businesses, and the negotiation of an enhanced Canada Pension Plan.

As I mentioned, between 1990 and 2015, he led a human resources firm, Morneau Shepell, through a period of transformational growth. As a community leader, he has worked to support the arts, help at-risk-youth, and improve access to health care and education. Over a period of 20 years, he has sat on many boards. Internationally, he founded a school for Somali and Sudanese girls in Kakuma Refugee Camp, a UN camp in northern Kenya. He has co-authored a book, The Real Retirement and previously served as pension investment advisor to the Ontario government.

He holds a BA from Western University.

We should give a round of applause for Western University. He has an MSc from the London School of Economics. Any London School of Economics people here? There we go, down here.

Minister Morneau will be interviewed today by Jan De Silva. Jan is an experienced international business executive with a track record for excelling in on-the-ground leadership roles. As President of the Toronto Region Board of Trade, she is spearheading efforts to make Toronto one of the most competitive and sought-after business regions in the world.

Prior to joining the Board, Jan spent 14 years in leadership roles in Asia. She served as CEO of Sun Life Financial Hong Kong subsidiary and mainland China's joint venture. She co-founded and was CEO of Retail China Limited, which was acquired in 2010.

She later served as a Dean of Ivey Asia, leading the Hong Kong campus in Asia Operations of Ivey Business School of Western University. She has been named Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women, a "Woman of Our Time" by Hong Kong's South China Morning Post and made the Canadian Board of Diversity Council's inaugural Diversity 50 List.

I would now like to invite Canada's Minister of Finance, Bill Morneau, to the stage for some initial remarks, and then he will be joined by Jan later.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen: The Honourable Bill Morneau.

The Honourable Bill Morneau

Good morning. I would like to start by thanking you, Kent, for that voluminous introduction and for the shout from whoever went to Western. It is great to be here this morning. I would like to thank the Canadian Club, the Toronto Region Board of Trade and the Empire Club for hosting this breakfast this morning. It is great to see so many people coming out to hear about what the federal government is trying to do on behalf of all Canadians. I am looking forward to having a question and answer period after.

To the extent you have burning questions that you think will be able to be answered this morning and done in a way that has a little less noise than the House of Commons, I am delighted to answer those questions. It is my fourth budget as the Minister of Finance for Canada. What I can tell you is that if any of you were surprised by anything that we announced yesterday, I think you probably have not been watching us for the last four years.

We took a look at what was going on in Canada in 2015, and we came out to Canadians and said what we believed we needed to do in order to deal with stubbornly high unemployment, in order to deal with lower rates of growth than we should expect in a country as great as Canada. We said that we needed to make investments in middle-class Canadians; we needed to make investments to deal with people's worries about the future and ensure that people are able to do better, so that our economy can do better.

That was the starting point four years ago, and I think, as you will hear me talk today, you will see that continues to be what animates us as we think about how this country should move forward. To set the frame for the budget yesterday, I would like to step back and just identify the context.

All of you, I know, are watching what is going on around the world. We are seeing a raucous debate in the United Kingdom, with people questioning the benefits of immigration and the benefits of trade and tearing their country apart. We are seeing enormous challenges in France where the gilet jaunes are questioning the nature of their economic success and how that success goes to the broader population in that country. We are seeing a brand of divisive politics in the United States where people are increasingly finding it difficult to find common ground and talk to each other about what they think are the important things that the United States should be doing for the future. This is the backdrop that we find ourselves in. Unfortunately, this discussion is not getting at the root issues, the root challenges that we are seeing in our economy. I will tell you what I worry about.

I worry about that brand of populism and anxiety, but I really worry about issues that are facing everyday Canadians: high-household debt, the concern that the next generation will not be able to do as well as the generation that is doing well today, the worry that people will not be able to get into a house and that they will not be able to have the same sort of success as their parents or their grandparents might have had as this country grew. That is the context for our budget. It is not really that much of a different context from what we saw in 2015 except for one important point. We are doing much better as a country, today, than we were just three-and-a-half years ago. If we think about the measures that we put in place early on in our mandate, the expansion of the Canada Child Benefit, the changes we put in place with the Canada Workers Benefit, we have seen some material changes in how Canadians are faring, just three-and-a-half years later. We have created, together, 900,000 new jobs in this country. We have, just to put it in context, literally, the lowest unemployment rates that we have seen in my lifetime. It is really a strong starting point for the next things that we want to do for our country. We have also taken real efforts to make sure that those people in our country that have not been doing well have the possibility of doing better.

One of the things I am proudest about over the last three-and-a-half years is the combination of the Canada Child Benefit, the Canada Workers Benefit—which gives people trying to get into work, the opportunity to earn more as they move from social assistance into work—and the increase in the Guaranteed Income Supplement. This means that in just three-and-a-half years, we have raised 825,000 Canadians out of poverty. When you have a demographic challenge, when you realize you are facing issues that are enormously problematic because we have more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 15, getting more people actively at work, finding a way to raise people into the possibility of greater success for their family is critically important for them, and it is critically important for everybody in this room as well. That is the starting point of our budget, Budget 2019.

As much as I would like to think that the best unemployment numbers that we have seen in more than a generation and that the lowest poverty rates in a generation should mean that everyone in this room and across the country is no longer worrying about the future, it is just not the case. People are very anxious about what they are seeing.

The world around us is moving faster than it has ever moved before. We know that the pace of job change is, if anything, accelerating. The budget we put forth this year is trying to address that very real challenge.

One of the things that I think will have a lasting and important impact on how people pursue their careers, in this country, is something we introduced yesterday. It is called the Canada Training Benefit. What we realize people need to see is the possibility that they can get the skills and the training they need to be successful in their current jobs and to consider what their next step might be in their lives, but it is difficult. It is hard to take time off work. It is hard to support your family if you are not working. For many people, it is hard to actually find the money to have that training course. What we have put in place is an approach that allows people every four years, four weeks off. It allows them to go on the EI system, so they can get 55% of the average wage while they are off. It allows them to get a $250 tax credit each year, $1,000 every four years, and up to $5,000 over a lifetime, to fund their training. What I think is going to happen is that people are going to seek to find ways that they can constantly improve themselves. We already have a great situation in terms of an educated work force in our country. We have among the highest rates of post-secondary education in the OECD, but we need to be ready for the changes that are coming at this, and we are trying to prepare Canadians to be ready.

We also look at our housing market. You will know, many of you in this room, that we have done an awful lot in housing over the last three-and-a-half years. One of the first things I did as your Finance Minister was put in place some rules that did make it a little bit more difficult to get mortgages, because we saw that there was an increase in prices that was unsustainable. Those efforts have, in fact, stabilized our market, especially in places like Toronto and Vancouver. We have also put in place approaches to ensure that we have increased housing supply, especially, in affordable housing. Even with all that, we know that there is a real challenge for people, middle-class Canadians to get into their first home. We had to look at how we could do this in a way that did not actually cause challenges with market stability. We have come up with a First-Time Home Buyer Incentive. That means that, for families that cannot quite get into that first job, they are going to get a shared equity mortgage with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, meaning that, if they do that—and it is up to

10% of the value of the home, up to $480,000—they will be able to pass off some of those mortgage costs to the CMHC, lowering their monthly mortgage costs.

What do we aspire to here? We have about 100,000 Canadians each year that are first-time home buyers. We think that this measure might increase the number of people who are able to get into a first-time home buyer position by as much as 40%, that is, taking it from 100,000 families that can get into that first home to maybe up to 140,000 families on an annual basis. That is a significant and important benefit for people who want to see that they actually have the possibility for that dream for them and their families.

We did not stop there. There are other things that we have moved forward on, things that are in a continuum of what we have worked on over the last number of years. We have recognized that helping students to be optimistic is critically important. Having the possibility of a home and having the training benefit down the road are important. Many students are burdened with high debt loads, so we took a look at the amount that we were charging, as a federal government, for debt for student loans, and we realized that we could lower that to the prime lending rate.

That means that students—and there are about 1 million people in this country that have that debt—will pay, on average, $2,000 less in those debt charges over the course of their life. Two hundred thousand more people each year come out of those institutions with that debt. We are going to give them more optimistic futures that they can face up to the challenges that they will have in their working careers.

We have looked at seniors, and we have said we have made a lot of progress with seniors, but we want seniors, if they are going to work, to be able to continue to be able to put more money back in their pockets, so we gave them a higher earnings exemption, so, as they are on OAS and GIS, they can still actually do some work, if they choose, and keep more of that money for themselves.

Importantly, we looked around the country, and we realized that in a place like Toronto, everyone is part of the new digital economy. That is not the case around our country.

We know that in rural communities and places that are in the farthest reaches of our country, many people still do not have access to high-speed Internet, let alone actually have high-speed Internet. We put in place a plan, a plan that is working together with business to increase the amount of funding we put into high-speed Internet. It is going to make a difference in the short term. The Accelerated Investment Incentive we put in the Fall Economic Statement means that private sector actors like Bell, TELUS, Rogers and others are actually going to put more money into high-speed Internet in rural areas. On top of that, we are going to use the Canada Infrastructure Bank to crowd in more private sector money so that everyone across our country can have access to high-speed Internet by 2030. This is an important measure that will mean that Canada will be at the forefront of the world as we face up to the reality of a digital economy.

I know because I am in front of a business audience that some of you are asking How are we going to pay for all of this? I think that is an important question. We, as you know, back in 2015, said that we thought the first and most important thing was to make sure that we invested in middle-class Canadians. Those investments have made a really big difference in terms of our economic outcomes.

I mentioned the excellent job report, but we also had really significant growth in 2017. We think that we will continue to be at the forefront of G7 growth in the years to come. What we do know is that we also were blessed with a very strong balance sheet. Our debt, as a function of the overall economy, is the lowest among G7 countries.

We have been able to reduce it each and every year we have been in office. You will see in my fiscal track that was announced yesterday that we have committed to continuing to reduce that debt as a function of our economy over time, so that we can be resilient in the face of any challenges we might face in the economy in the future. We also have a commitment to reduce the deficit as a function of our economy as we have done each and every year. Essentially, the debate is should we have a measured and appropriate way of reducing our debt and reducing our deficit over time, or should we take an approach favoured, I will admit, by some people who sit across from me, in a very loud way in the House of Commons, and do it really rapidly to get rid of the debt or the deficit in a really fast pace, so that we actually cause ourselves to be in a more difficult economic position by doing that more rapidly than we should do for an economy that is performing as well as Canada? You have seen our decision. Our decision is to invest in Canadians, to invest in middle-class Canadians, to give them the skills that they need, to give them the optimism for the future, and that confidence, we know, is going to allow us to continue on the great success story that is Canada. Thank you very much for being here this morning. If you have any really softball questions, I am happy to answer them. Thanks very much.

In Conversation with Mr. Jan De Silva

JD: Good morning, Minister. Great to have you here.

I want to echo what Kent said. It is just a pleasure to be working with Andrew and Kent and our three organizations. We share many of the same members, so it makes a lot of sense to just bring us all together in the same room. I am amazed. I have got notes, and you did not have a single note. This is very near and dear and close to the work that you have been doing.

BM: It is worse for me than that. Jan was sitting beside my wife, so she took notes.

JD: I have got lots of notes, lots and lots of notes.

For us, as a business community, the budget that has been put forward is very much thinking about needs of Canada, as a whole. Because we are here in Toronto, and we have a business audience, we would like to do a little bit more of a deep dive to make sure we are understanding how this becomes a platform for business growth and job creation. Let me start by saying we have got so much momentum in Toronto right now, because of the last five, ten years of an amazing innovation sector. The businesses that Andrew has built, and others have built—I know Mayor Vrbanovic from Kitchener is in the room and is part of the amazing Innovation Corridor, so elements of this budget really resonated for our innovators. The availability of SR&ED credits coming towards them, the treatment of some of the stock options about not hindering what is happening in that innovation space and the global talent are all critical enablers. Thanks so much for that. A big part of the budget was also about the anxiety that is facing middle-class Canada. We really feel that as well. As our businesses are trying to figure out how they move into new disruptive technologies, what does that mean for jobs of the future? That is, again, really strong placement. Really, we applaud that kind of thinking. I would like to just recognize that thinking from the Minister. A round of applause for those elements, in particular. With that, I wanted to do a little bit more deep diving to understand or double-click through some of the points that you have raised.

As you did indicate, for businesses, professionals, students, there is concern about how we keep our skills relevant. You outlined at a high level some of the plans that are in place, but how do you see that moving forward in terms of making sure people are getting access to the right skills at the right time?

BM: This is central to what we have talked about in our budget. I have identified a few things that we have put forth, obviously, the Canada Training Benefit being the most significant. Let me step back and think about people at earlier stages of their lives. We have said to ourselves that we need to make sure that, at a young age, people have access to the kind of skills opportunities that they need. We put funding in for things like coding as people go through elementary and secondary school. With respect to university, I talked about the reduction in the debt charges that people have, but I did not talk about a couple of other things that we have done. We have put in place a strategy around encouraging young people that find that this is the opportunity that they seek, to consider apprenticeships.

We have put in place significant funding around encouraging people to get into apprenticeships. I know there are some people here from LiUNA who came to me talking about the need for more people in the skilled trades in a place like Toronto. One of the things that we have done that many people in this room will recognize as critically important is we have said that we want to work together with the business sector to think about how every student in this country, as they are going through post-secondary education, can have the opportunity for a co-op or work-integrated learning. The Business/Higher Education Roundtable and the work that David McKay from Royal Bank of Canada and Anne Sado from George Brown and now Meric Gertler from the University of Toronto have put forward the suggestion that we can actually get to a work-integrated learning opportunity for every single Canadian that wants it, if we put in the right amount of funding. With what we put in, we think that we will get 84,000 new spots for co-ops and work-integrated learning from here to 2022, 2023, and that means that we think the demand is about 150,000 spots.

We will actually be able to entirely fill that demand. That is a really important building block as people prepare themselves to get into the workforce. Of course, what we have done is we have said that once you are in the workforce, the idea that you can have that Canada Training Benefit for the refreshment of your skills is critically important. All of us in this room know that the lifecycle for the skills that we have, the new technologies, is not as long as it used to be. That is going to help people to remain capable of addressing those challenges.

JD: Yes, which is great. I really appreciate the folks as well on highly skilled trades. I know LiUNA, as you mentioned, are in the room. With some of the infrastructure funding that we have been advocating for and which your government has been very forthcoming in terms of trying to bring into our communities to correct housing and transit supply, we have got a huge shortage of folks coming through the trades, so our ability to work alongside your programs and make sure that there are stronger pathways for kids to get into those programs, I think, will serve us well. I think just in the Toronto region, about 146,000 jobs are being created over the next decade by the infrastructure funding that has been committed here; 127,000 of those are new jobs, so it really is incumbent on us to help move folks into those opportunities. Deloitte and the Business Council of Canada recently released a scorecard measuring our global competitiveness. It showed that 55% of our leaders are very concerned about the competitiveness of our business environment, citing taxation and regulation as among the biggest barriers.

What measures do you anticipate on regulations? You refer to that in the budget. What do you see happening in that regard?

BM: Of course, we hear this, and we are listening to this issue. Those are two separate issues, obviously, taxation and regulation. On the taxation front, we moved forward, as I mentioned, with the ability to accelerate capital costs depreciation in our Fall Economic Statement. That was an important measure that allows people to invest quickly, to create jobs. It also ensures that we are more than competitive with the United States.

On the next investment for a Canadian company, there is about a 5% advantage for that next investment in Canada versus the United States. Our actual tax rates are in a competitive zone. We are at about 27%. The United States is at about 26% in terms of federal and either provincial or state, depending on the country. Of course, in the small business sector, we are very competitive. We are much lower. Our small business tax rates are lower than any other country in the G7, including the United States.

From a regulatory standpoint, though, there is absolutely more to do. The biggest thing I hear is that, as I go around the country, the regulatory front is obviously getting big projects built. There is a big and legitimate concern that we, for example with pipelines, cannot get a pipeline built to get our resources to international markets. You know that we took an historic decision around the Trans Mountain Pipeline to purchase that pipeline. We are going through that process right now and going through the consultations.

We want to get this done, but we need to get it done right way, so that we actually have a demonstrated approach to getting a project like that done.

In the budget, specifically, we addressed some regulatory areas. We addressed the agricultural sector; we addressed the health sector; and we addressed the transportation sector where we know that those are the places where business leaders have said that these are big places where there are challenges. We have put funding in so that we can actually try and get at those challenges. We are working with business to identify the specific regulatory barriers. We always have to think about health and safety, of course, but we do not want to have regulations that do not make sense. I think there was some applause for what we did in the Fall Economic Statement, and now I think people are going to watch carefully to make sure we deliver. I will tell you that our intent is to deliver.

JD: I know we have had an opportunity to meet with you. We are part of the eight large cities in Canada.

The boards of trade are working together through the Canadian Global Cities Council. One of the things we have also been trying to advocate, in Ottawa but also across the provinces is just harmonizing interprovincial regulations. That is also a huge pain point for helping our business scale up here as well. I know that is not in scope.

BM: No, we should all acknowledge this is a tough challenge. Canada is a great country. We are fortunate to live here. There are some things that are challenges.

Interprovincial barriers are challenges. We all have to work together to get things done. In the transportation sector, for example, it is not sensible that there are different trucking regulations as you go from one province to the other, but there are important things that have developed over time that we need to break down.

I would ask everybody in this room, in your day-to-day life and your business life to be an advocate for breaking down barriers that do not make sense.

That is the most problematic issue for us: getting those barriers broken down.

JD: We are here to help with that for sure. You are a downtown Toronto MP, and we are with a downtown business audience. This is one of the most successful job creation centres in the country with the momentum that we presently have, but, with this success, it has come at a price. Housing has been really a struggle.

Our young professionals, in particular, fresh university grads. I met an amazing student who is just graduating out of Ivey Business School, and he is going to be working at Bain. He can afford $1,000 a month to pay for an apartment in Toronto, but he cannot find anything as he is trying to get into the workforce, so I know there is a huge focus with this sharing equity incentive, but what other advice would you have or what other thoughts would you have for some of our young professionals that are just struggling to get into the housing market in a starting point, even in the rental side of things?

BM: I think lots of people in this room are parents, and they recognize how big this challenge is for the next generation. The things that we can do, as a federal government, we are working on. We have put in place significant funding for more rental construction across the country. In this budget, if you take a look at it, we put in place additional funding, a $10 billion additional funding amount for rental construction financing across our country. We see that as critically important for dealing with supply. I know there is at least one mayor here—we put in place a housing supply challenge for municipalities, a $300 million amount, and municipalities are going to come to us and give us ideas on how they can expand supply, because, really, the issue in a city like Toronto is very much about supply. That is what we are trying to do to encourage more actual building. Obviously, in a place like Toronto, it will come with debates about density. Those are going to make that a challenge, for sure.

We will continue to be on this. We will continue to think about supply, even this idea, this shared equity mortgage that we put in place. What it means is people can put 5% or 10% of their house value with the CMHC, but it is only 5% if it is for a house that already exists. It is 10% if it is new supply—again, creating an incentive towards new supply. I think we need to keep encouraging people at the municipal level, at the provincial level, to think about supply. That is what I will be doing from my position.

JD: We looked very carefully. I think there are some good opportunities. If you look at the average condo price, some of the programming that has been put in place with the CMHC program will make sense, but it is likely going to make sense outside of Toronto, which kind of connects to the next question.

Transit continues to be a huge need that we have throughout the Toronto-Waterloo corridor—two-way, all day GO and other types of ways of moving people across this economic zone. Your government has done an amazing job of saying we are going to make infrastructure funding available. The prime minister was at our gala dinner in February. We were having a fireside chat about how the dollars have not flowed as quickly as we had hoped. I asked him what his thoughts were.

He said stay tuned for the budget. With the budget, could you tell me how are we going to help move these infrastructure dollars into market, into construction, into solving some of the transit gaps that we have got?

BM: I just have a huge sense of relief. Thank goodness I followed what I was supposed to do. Again, for those of you who have not spent as much time on our budget as I have, let me give you the detail of one of the things that we did yesterday. We have had some challenges in getting the commitment of infrastructure funding out in our country. We made a really significant commitment in 2015 that we would take what was then a $90-billion commitment over ten years and make a $180-billion commitment to infrastructure over ten years and also try to crowd in private sector money through the Canada Infrastructure Bank. These are big commitments underpinning the need for us to have better infrastructure not only in our cities but across the country. That has been proceeding at pace. This year, we have spent about $13.9 billion that is, this year; it is the fiscal year, so up until the end of March 31st, we spent that on infrastructure. It is not meeting up to everything that we wanted to get done.

That means that in places like Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and New Brunswick, we have not been able to get the provinces fully on board with all the things we want to do. Yesterday, we announced that we are putting an additional $2.2 billion into a municipal infrastructure top up that is going out to municipalities across the country. It is in a frame that has been used before, the gas tax. It has got a formula. In Toronto, for example, and I spoke to John Tory the evening before the budget, to tell him that that works out to about $150 million or so, a little more than that, I think, going to Toronto, as an example. I do not know the number for other cities off the top of my head, but the point is it is going to make a material impact on cities' abilities to get at infrastructure projects that they want to get at and do it in a fashion that means we are moving forward quickly. We think it is the right thing for the long term. We also think it is the right thing for our economy at this moment in time.

JD: Perfect. One last question from me before I take some of the questions that have come in from the audience.

In your opening remarks, you were talking about just the global backdrop that we face right now and some of the challenges that are happening in other major markets. One thing that we wanted to reflect on is our three largest trading partners, the U.S., China, and the UK. We are facing a lot of headwinds with each of those relationships right now. How did that influence some of the forecasting that you did and how did that influence some of the choices that were made around this budget?

BM: In terms of the forecast, I see Craig Wright here, from RBC; we do not actually use our forecasts. As a continuing approach, the federal government uses private sector economists' forecast. We use a large number of private sector economists in order to come up with what we think the economic indicators are going to be. I am presuming that Craig, in his forecasts—and Craig, you can tell me whether or not you did this—considered the impact of global trade on his forecasts. That is the way it is supposed to work.

What is clearly the case is that these are real issues, that the current issue between the U.S. and China is challenging. I know they are working as well as they can to try and get to a better spot. I am in pretty regular touch with Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury Secretary, who informs me that those discussions are going reasonably well, albeit challenging. I am looking forward, hopefully, to a resolution to some of those tariff barriers that we are seeing causing global impediments.

With respect to the UK, we will continue to trade with the UK on a favoured basis. We are preparing for whatever eventuality comes out of the Brexit discussion. I am sure that we will continue to have a strong tie, based on our historic relationship. With the United States directly, the USMCA, or the new NAFTA, is proceeding along the ratification process. We are in discussions about the steel and aluminum tariffs. I am cautiously optimistic we will get to a solution there. We are certainly not there yet, but we are having discussions that are proving to be fruitful. It is a challenging time.

There is no doubt about the fact that the anxiety facing people in major industrialized countries is resulting in politics being fraught with more challenges, and that immigration looks different in different countries. Some people are—if they do not have a job—worried that people coming to their country will take their jobs. We have got the great, good fortune in Canada that we do not have that to nearly the same degree. Our immigration system is working well. New immigrants are doing very well in this country. I think, broadly, we embrace immigration. Those same factors around immigration are also impacting people's views around trade, and we just need to keep working at developing these relationships, which we have done to get us through this difficult time.

JD: I would say the other thing we are focusing on even closer to home is what we can be doing about interprovincial trade because the ability for businesses in Canada to scale up in Canada, I think, is also a critical opportunity that we are just not missing.

We have had some discussions with Minister LeBlanc and will continue to advocate at a provincial level for that, but that, to me, is another big opportunity for us.

JD: Questions from the audience. Let me just pick. This is with respect to high-speed Internet in underserved and rural areas. Can you elaborate on the incentives that will be put in place to encourage more private sector participation in this regard? That is about high-speed Internet in underserved and rural areas.

BM: The way we have attacked this problem is we recognized that the economics for high-speed Internet in different parts of the country are different. The first thing we did is we put in place the Accelerated Investment Incentive. That gives the business sector ability to invest more and more rapidly. We expect to see about $1 billion of additional investment in high-speed Internet from the key providers. Obviously, those are going to be in places where the economics, for them, are strong. Then, behind that, we expect that the ability for the Canada Infrastructure Bank to put in place some funding and to crowd in private sector funding will be at the slightly less economic part, because the Canada Infrastructure Bank can have some, what they call concessional capital, so their returned expectations are not the same as the major telcos. We have got about $1 billion on their first tranche, and they have got the second tranche with about $1 billion from the Infrastructure Bank, plus, we hope, about another couple of billion dollars crowded in from the private sector. Here, we are at the $3–$4 billion investment level. Then, we expect that the CRTC has about $750 million that can also be invested. Then, underneath that we have got government funding of about $1.7 billion in those very hard-to-reach, last-mile places. That includes an expectation that we will be able to use a new technology called Low Earth Orbit technology to make investments. There is a company called Telesat, for example, that is a world leader in this area where we might actually be able to get a less expensive way to get high-speed Internet to really hard-to-reach places. It is a comprehensive plan using the private sector and public sector funding to get at an issue which we think is really important for every Canadian.

JD: Absolutely agree. Your budget put significant focus in an investment on reducing carbon emissions, especially in cities. Thank you. What do you need from us and what is in it for us? A question from the audience.

BM: Let me start by saying—and I know there is certainly a lot of discussion about this: We see that putting a price on pollution is the only responsible way for us to move forward. I know there are provinces out there that are questioning whether that is an approach that makes sense, but we think that the idea that we can create the incentive towards new technologies that actually reduce our carbon footprint by putting a price on pollution is eminently sensible. It is an idea that has come out over years, mainly heralded by right of centre political parties for most of its iteration. We are going to take the step of taking every single dollar that comes to the federal government, if we are the backstop for this, and putting it back to people. All of you are going to be doing your taxes soon. Sorry, that is part of the deal. I love it when I go through Porter Airport. There is a sign there, and it says "You are retiring, but the tax man has not." And she always says, " That is you." The point is, in your tax return this year, what you are going to get is you are going to get that money back in advance. You are going to get, in Ontario, for a family—it is going to be about $307. That is equivalent to, for at least eight out of ten Ontarians, what that price on pollution will actually result in. You will have a decision to make. You will have a decision to make with what you will do with that $307. Do you keep doing what you are doing now, or do you do some sort of home retrofit, so you actually spend less on home heating?

That will be each and every person's decision. The economic argument is that the collectivity, all of our decisions, together, will actually get us to a better place. That is what we are trying to achieve. It is not a novel idea in the world. It is certainly the case that this is going to help us with climate change, of course, but it is even going to help us with things like getting pipelines built. I can tell you that with respect to getting pipelines to go to the United States right now, one of the impediments is that the states that have to approve these pipelines going through their states are actually looking at our approach to climate change and asking whether we are actually meeting up to their expectations. This is a real issue. We need to get on it. We are just going to stay with it, and we hope that the people in this room, people across the country will support our efforts to be a responsible country in the face of what is really devastating climate change around the world.

JD: Certainly, you see the global movement. I think it was a 14-year-old that started it now, by just trying to raise awareness on it is their future. This is all the time I have got with you now. Nancy, thanks for the tips. I could not work them into the discussion, but maybe another time. On behalf of the business community, I want to thank you so much for coming, for sharing.
You are clearly deeply into this. Not a single note in front of you. I just want to recall, I think it was four years ago, in this very room, when you were newly elected our new Finance Minister. You were talking about the transition into the role and the amazing bureaucrats that you were working with and all the big binders that they were pushing across the table at you.

Clearly, you have got those memorized and down pat. I think there are a lot of things that are really good news for the business community, for Toronto and for our middle class here, in the region. Thank you very much for all of the time that you have put into this and all of the effort that you are putting in across the country on our behalf. A round of applause for our Finance Minister Morneau.

BM: Thank you.

Concluding Remarks, by Mr. Andrew Graham, President, Canadian Club of Toronto

You can stay here. This will not take too long. First of all, my name is Andrew Graham. I am the President of the Canadian Club of Toronto, and I am very pleased that we were able to host you, Minister, today, in an environment that was probably less noisy, at least, than what you have had in the House of Commons. On behalf of the Canadian Club, the Empire Club, and the Toronto Region Board of Trade, I am really pleased that you chose to come here to our podium to share news of the budget so soon after you delivered it. I think two things struck me about your remarks. First of all, your clear passion for the issues.

I think you have got a really great grasp, and you clearly care a lot about what the environment is globally and what the environment is in Canada for families and individuals here. There is certainly lots in this budget for many different Canadians to think about and appreciate. I think, second of all—it has been mentioned before—is just that you have such a strong grasp of the budget and the issues that you have been speaking without notes really impressive.

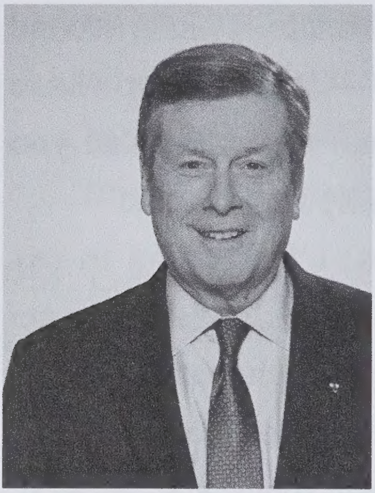
I sometimes speak without notes. I was going to say there is an easy way to speak without notes. It is just to get all the numbers wrong. That is the approach that I take, but it is very impressive to see just the grasp you have.

Thank you very much for that. Jan, thank you, as well, for leading such a thoughtful conversation with the Minister. Really great to get the perspective that you brought about the region here, of course, and also issues nationally.

Thank you very much to you both. Just before we close, I just want to mention that we, as nonprofit organizations, the Canadian Club, the Empire Club and the Toronto Region Board of Trade, count on our sponsors and partners to help us further our missions, and each contributes to making the city and the country stronger. Thank you very much to our sponsors, again: BMO, Bruce Power, EY, Freeman, Intact and LiUNA. Thank you very much.

Finally, a big thank you to the Hilton Hotel staff, mediaevents.ca, Canada's online event space, and VVC for livestreaming today's event. ***Merci a***nd thank you. We hope to see you all again soon.

Have a good day.



JOHN TORY
MAYOR OF TORONTO:

LEADING TORONTO FORWARD

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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March 20, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present John Tory, Mayor of Toronto, for today's topic, "Leading Toronto Forward." The Empire Club has a long view of history. This is the third time Mayor Tory has spoken here as Mayor. I should note, he also spoke here when he was Ontario PC Leader; he presented his speech in

2008 entitled "Looking Outward Together as a Free Citizen in 2013." Not only does Mayor Tory have a history speaking at the Empire Club, but he has also served on the board.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

His Worship John Tory, Mayor of Toronto

Guests:

Mr. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government & External Affairs, Waste Connections Canada

Mr. Mark Cote, Head of Development, Canada Oxford Properties Group

Ms. Jan De Silva, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Mr. Joseph Mancinelli, International Vice President & Regional Manager of Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA

Mr. Denzil Minnan-Wong; Deputy Mayor & Councillor, Ward 16 (Don Valley East) City of Toronto

Mr. Chris Murray, City Manager, City of Toronto

Mr. Gareth Seltzer, Co-Founder, RYOT; Chief Executive Officer, DAIS Creative Media; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Tim Smitheman, Government Affairs Manager, Enbridge; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Antoinette Tummillo, President, Antoinette Tummillo and Associates Inc.; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Recently, I took a look at our archives and found that as a board member, he was responsible for making introductions at a 1995 mayoral debate between then-candidates June Rowlands, who did became mayor of Toronto, Gerry Meinzer and Barbara Hall.

Welcome back. Unlike Saturday Night Live, we do not have a five-timer's club, but we should. You would be in it.

Mayor Tory is a cohesive force in Toronto. He managed to attract people from various political backgrounds.

In the recent municipal election, voters handed him a second term as Toronto's Mayor. On that night, Mayor Tory made a commitment. He said, "Building on the foundations of the last four years, over the next four years, my goal is to make sure that no one anywhere feels like opportunity is a distant point on the horizon." Then, he went on to say, "We must continue to be a city that is a place of hope for everyone, not a place where people should lose hope."

Today, after 100 days, he is here to give us an update on his vision, his work since then and how he is looking forward. We are particularly lucky to have the Mayor's view on the heels of yesterday's federal budget. Toronto is not without its challenges, and the Mayor is busy working on many of them, including rental housing, home affordability, crime prevention, addressing gridlock, transit and, of course, that dreaded snow removal. I hear there is a snowstorm coming this afternoon, Mayor Tory. Are you ready for that one? That is good. Mayor Tory has been an advocate for finding new funding solutions for Toronto to get away solely from relying on property tax. This has been a problem that has plagued many of his predecessors.

I find it interesting that if you look at the Empire Club records from 1974, former Mayor Crombie spoke about that very problem, and we are still dealing with it in Toronto.

He said, “We still labour along with a property tax base as our main source of revenue, to supply an ever-widening range of services while the federal government has access to ever-increasing sources of revenue.” Since that time, the funding challenge has remained.

Mayor Tory has had to consider the delicate balance of affordability and restricting property taxes to below the inflation rate. Toronto is a world-class city, ranking in the top ten livable cities. Today, we will be hearing from our world-class Mayor. Since first being elected to Mayor in 2014, he has focused on ensuring Toronto remains a livable and affordable city. He has led city council in passing successful budgets.

They have kept taxes below the rate of inflation and prioritized services such as housing, parks, and student nutrition. He has worked to make the city government more modern and effective to deliver better services at a more competitive price.

Born and raised in Toronto, Mayor Tory has spent his career giving back to the city. He loves working with organizations such as the United Way, St. Mike’s Hospital and Civic Action. In office, he has been a constant champion for Toronto, securing billions of dollars from the provincial and federal governments for transit.

Mayor Tory began his career practicing law in Toronto, and he became a managing partner of one of Canada’s biggest law firms. In the 1980s he served as Principal Secretary to Premier Bill Davis and as Associate Secretary of the Ontario cabinet. He has served as Commissioner of the Canadian Football League, CEO of Rogers, and Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

Of course, everyone knows he was a radio talk show host. He and his wife Barbara have been married for 39 years. They have four children and five grandchildren.

Please, welcome the 65th Mayor of Toronto and Empire Club five-timer, His Worship Mayor John Tory.

His Worship Mayor John Tory

Kent, thank you for that very generous introduction. Head Table guests and ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming out today. I should correct the record.

You find yourself correcting the record the odd time in this job, and this one is particularly important. Since our eldest son is turning 40 this year, I should note that we have actually been married 41 years this year. Not that these days it particularly matters, but I just thought I would just correct the record, that is all. It is as simple as that.

May I, as the first order of business, do something that Kent and I agreed that I would do because it is my pleasure to do it? I probably would have done it a second time if he had done it, which is to introduce the members of city council, my colleagues on city council who are here today and there are quite a number of them.

Deputy Mayor Stephen Holyday, James Pasternak, Deputy Mayor Ana Bailão, Councillor Joe Cressy, Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong, Councillor Brad Bradford, Councillor Gary Crawford—who, while it was said I had shepherded those budgets through, he has been the Budget Chief for all five and has done a fantastic job at that—Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson, Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, and, I should note, only because he is here and you do not want to start with the Head Table, but our City Manager, who is relatively new to his job, Chris Murray, who is doing a great job; although, I am sure he asks himself at least three times a week, "What could I have been thinking?" One of his deputies, Giuliana Carbone is also here, I understand.

We have, at the moment, I should tell you, three Deputy Managers in the City of Toronto, all of whom are women. We have two new Deputy Police Chiefs who are women, and we are really trying hard, as a city, to make sure that we walk the talk when it comes to making sure that in our leadership ranks, that women are able to take on those jobs. President Kent, I should tell you, I mentioned this to you at lunch, so I am not surprising you with this, and I determined that he was a relatively recent recruit to MPAC.

Some of you will know MPAC is the organization that does the municipal property assessment. I said to him that when I was the Leader of the Opposition at Queen's Park, if you were badly in need of a round of applause, all you had to do was spit out some line that was critical of MPAC.

I said I apologize. He has only been there three years, so none of his was his responsibility. In fact, I can say he has fixed it. My position finally evolved to the point, as Opposition Leader, where I would just go into any room in the province, pretty much, and say that my only prescription for MPAC was to blow it up. I apologize for that if that is in any way connected to any of the work that you are doing.

I hope you all enjoyed the fact that walking over here, there is always that day of the year, and it happens to be the first day that spring is going to officially arrive, I guess, this day, this year. I think the real mark of spring is when you feel the warmth of the sun for the first time. It is there.

Many, many very pleasant winter days. I am going to mention, at my peril, winter a little bit later on in my speech, because I have an initiative I want to undertake in that regard. Today, the warmth of the sun was definitely to be felt.

I will just say to you that this winter has been very challenging, and it has reminded me in terms of the feedback, if I can call it that, that I get that it reminds me of the constant daily adulation I faced as a cable television president where daily you have got adulation from the public almost every day, all the time. I will make reference to the winter, because I think that difficult as winters may be, they represent a huge opportunity for us. I want to thank you all for being here today, and, more to the point, I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk about this great city. It is an amazing place. We are so lucky to live here. It does not mean by any means that we have achieved perfection, but I think we have come a long way, as a city in years, going back a long way, under a lot of leaders in the nonprofit sector and business, in labour and in government. I use the term ‘our city’ quite deliberately, because this is our city.

All of us have a stake. I have lived my life as many people in this room. You are here because you care about the city. We all have a stake and a say in how the city grows and thrives and plans its future. It is my honour and privilege at this point in history to be the Mayor.

Everywhere I go and everything that I do, you try your best to make sure that it is to do the right thing, to try your best to advance the interests of the city and make sure that the success that we have enjoyed over time is continued going forward. It is one of the reasons why I have focused so much on working so hard to build better relationships with the people of Toronto. I spent a great deal of time out around the city listening to people because I find a lot of what you hear that is most valuable—and this is not disrespect to professional public servants or anybody else—is what you hear directly from people, as well as the members of city council who, themselves, are doing the same thing with the city staff. And, I think, what is very, very important is to work well with and listen to the people who are in the other governments because the bottom line is we have to work together. It is the only way that things get done.

You all know this. It does not matter what kind of occupation you have, if you try to do things by yourself, then you are not going to get as much done as if you work together to get things done. I would say to you that we are getting things done. I am not going to give you a long recitation of that today, but I will tell you just a little bit of what we have done in the first 100 days of this second term.

I will say, it was gratifying for me, but it is not a matter of personal gratification. It was important as a means of allowing me to have the confidence to move forward with some of the things that we are doing and some of the things I am going to talk about today that are going to be seen as new that I received a mandate of 63% of the Toronto voters in the election, so it allows me with a degree of confidence to continue the work that we have started together.

In those first 100 days of the second term, we have made tremendous progress. We have, very importantly, found a way to speed up work on the Relief Line, which is our single most needed transit project. It is in the transit plan approved by the city council. Transit plans take a long time. Any opportunity you can find working with others to shorten the time that you can have that go from a concept and a plan to a transit line on which people are riding to and from different parts of the city is important. I can assure you that the way we found to speed up work on the Relief Line so far, by two years earlier than expected, is something that is going to be hugely important to the people of Toronto trying to get around, but also to our economy and to making sure that that opportunity that Kent referred to, that I talked about on election night, is shared more equally across the city. I can tell you right now that while we have achieved already a speed up of two years and put the funding in place to achieve it, I am looking every day with the staff and with the other governments for ways to further speed up that most important of projects. We have also approved the first significant phase of what we call the "Housing Now Plan." This was something that I actually asked for some information on during the election campaign, hoping that I would be re-elected, and I got to work on it the day after the election. What it is going to do, simply put, is open up 40 acres of land the city has declared surplus to its needs, owned by the city; it is going to open it up to developers that are both for-profit and nonprofit developers, likely by way of a long-term lease, so that we will maintain ownership of those lands. The resulting development, which will be done through a competitive process, will produce more than 10,000 new rental units in the city of Toronto, at least a third of them affordable.

This represents the largest ever expansion of affordable housing in Toronto; although, it is only a step in the direction of what we need to get done. Shovels will be in the ground on some of the projects on those 11 parcels as early as next year, which is an urgency that I hope we see demonstrated. In the budget that Councillor Crawford led on with only the most appropriate involvement of the Mayor, as the leader of the city council, in a very tough budget year, we have protected all city services and kept the property tax increase at the rate of inflation while at the same time, on some of the most critical services like transit and like housing, we actually increased the size of our investment.

It proved that budget did, as the previous budgets had done, that you can, at one and the same time protect city services, keep tax increases to the rate of inflation and expand particular priority city services all at the same time, something that people often declare to be impossible.

Beyond that, what we have done—those are things that really address the priorities we said we would address during the election campaign—I hope that what we have also done is to continue to set a tone and create a climate of civility and consensus building, both at City Hall itself, but also in my dealings with the other governments. I strongly believe, as I said at the outset, that you have to work together, and I strongly believe that in order to work together in any kind of credible way that accomplishes results, you have to act in a climate of civility and consensus-building, create that kind of climate. It does not mean you agree all the time.

I am not going to talk about the federal budget, today, but I am also prepared, because I now do not have a party affiliation in this job, to say that while there were some things that I would have seen—there are always things you want to see from the other governments that do not come through—I did welcome a number of the things that were in the budget, including $167 million that we are going to get this year to help with our transit needs, including help for first-time homebuyers, including even funding for things like Harbourfront, which is a fundamental cultural attraction that exists in our city.

We need those things to be healthy for the people who live here and also for people who visit the city.

I think it is particularly important to focus, as I do and I will continue to do, without exception, I hope, on that climate of civility and consensus-building, because these are very charged times, politically. I think you know that.

You can see it from around the world in many different ways, but I think we, here in this country, especially, in this country, especially in this city, where we have shown the world there is another way when it comes to consensus-building and working together and accepting and embracing people as they are and getting the best of them, that there is a different way to do things.

I think the longer we can continue to buck those trends that are happening in many other parts of the world, the better, and we will continue to work together for the betterment of our city. We simply cannot and must not accept excessive division and polarization or bureaucratic inertia in an action. Working together means working.

It does not mean that you do not do anything, but it also does mean that you try to avoid, I think, excessive polarization and division, which we see in so many other places.

I do not think this is a lesson that is going to be new to any of you in this room, because I think no matter where you are, experience has certainly taught me in business, in law, in nonprofit work, even in the Canadian Football League where you want to see a bunch of people who are difficult to herd, it is the cats around that table who own sports teams who are just a different breed of cat, I can assure you.

The bottom line is there is always a way to make something work if you put your mind to it and just say that is what you are determined to do.

That brings me to what I want to talk about next, and that is three significant new initiatives that part of my plans for the next four years. More importantly, I want to speak to you briefly about how I plan to deliver on them, because you get more done when you set priorities and make plans. We talked about obvious priorities that I am going to make reference to during the election campaign, but with the help of my office and our city staff and my colleagues, I have come up with some other things that I am going to lay out over the next few weeks that we have to do in order to keep this city successful and make the kinds of decisions and investments we have to make.

My main priorities, let me be clear, on which I sought re-election, have not changed. Every single day I will be devoting as much attention as I have to and as much attention as I can to working with city council and with the other levels of government to get transit built and to get that transit funded at the same time, because we have made huge progress to the billions of dollars in receiving financial support from the other governments that did not exist when I became Mayor.

We still have work to do, largely, because if we are doing our job properly—and I said this yesterday—we have to keep planning out for transit 20 and 25 years ahead and not stop with a very complete, thorough and expensive and extensive plan that we have today. It is only the first phase of a plan that should have been the way we operated 25 or 30 years ago, which is continuous planning for future public transit projects to take account of the needs of a growing city. We will continue to work on that. We will continue to work very hard on building affordable and accessible housing, and we will continue to work hard on keeping taxes, especially tax increases to the rate of inflation or below, which I think is a reasonable standard that I committed to during the election campaign, given some of the affordability issues that exist in a big and successful city like this.

Last, but not least—but it really should be first, because in the end, attracting jobs and investment and making this city successful from that standpoint is fundamental to our ability not just to employ people and not just to have the city to be prosperous—is that it is fundamental to pay for the services, the transit and everything else that we want to provide in order to maintain the quality of life that Kent referred to at the outset of his introduction.

It is time to continue to do those things, but it is also time to look ahead. It really goes beyond four years. It looks ahead even beyond that because change does not happen overnight, I say especially at City Hall. We are also working to make sure that things happen faster at City Hall in a number of different areas as a part of what we call "the modernization of the city government." Things do not happen quickly. Change does not happen quickly. I want to see us, taken together with the priorities I just mentioned, building transit, building housing, attracting jobs and investment and keeping the finances in good order, including modest-only tax increases, be a safe, clean and prosperous city for us but also for the generations ahead of us. Let us start with safe.

I want our streets to be safer. We all do. I think you will take note of the fact that, when I mention priority areas we were able to invest more in at the same time as keeping taxes low and at the same time as protecting all city services, one of those areas we were able to invest more in this year was community safety. We made significant investments there through this year's budget. Safety needs to be protected and enhanced in more than just the one area of community safety as it relates to law enforcement and matters connected to that.

The number of pedestrian and cyclist deaths in our city is unacceptable, period, full stop. I would say to you that it becomes even more unacceptable, if there is such a thing, when many of those deaths are preventable. In 2018, there were 41 pedestrian fatalities in Toronto. Of those 41, 16 were in Scarborough.

I took note of that when the statistics were mounting up to this level at the end of the year and asked for some background to be done on the deaths in Scarborough, since they represented 40% of all the fatalities of pedestrians in the city of Toronto, and, therefore, would give us some indication of maybe why those kinds of things were happening. I am here to talk to you about this, today, partly because of what those numbers told us. Scarborough has the most arterial roads in the city—'arterial roads' being defined as roads with four or more lanes of traffic and a speed limit of 60 km/h or higher. Scarborough also has the longest walking distance between protected, safe crossings compared to the rest of the city. For example, pedestrians have to walk, on average, six additional minutes to use a safe crossing, a crosswalk or a signalized intersection, compared to residents of Toronto and East York. An additional six-minute walk—you all would know this, but it is especially so for seniors or for young people—is quite a hike, especially in wintertime and especially for seniors and students and people like that, that might find that more of a burden.

The reality is, especially, if you have a destination that is right across the street, directly across the street, many people are not going to make what could amount to a 12-minute walk down to the intersection, across the street and back up the other side. Instead, they will cross mid-block. One of the other things you see when you examine these statistics is that many of the people who happen to be disproportionately senior citizens are being killed in mid-block trying to cross the street. That is true in Scarborough more so than any other area of the city—that plus people speeding through red lights are accounting for a disproportionate number of these deaths. The analysis of the Scarborough experience and the Scarborough statistics tells us both of these things.

We also know that the wider the road, the longer the distance is between signals and crosswalks, the more likely a driver is to speed. That is why I support bringing forward a

"Vision Zero 2.0" plan. By that, that is kind of code that I guess people only at City Hall might understand.

"Vision Zero" was a program that we committed to during the last term in office, which is aimed at a very simple straightforward and, I think, common-sense objective, which is to achieve zero fatalities from pedestrians being killed by cars. It really is a pedestrian safety program that has been adopted in places around the world. The '2.0' simply says we have been embarked on phase 1.0, which has seen a number of things and a very substantial investment of your tax dollars in enhancing the safety of the city. Clearly, our experience in Scarborough and across the city has indicated we have to do more.

I will be asking to be brought forward a Vision 2.0 plan with recommendations to lower speed limits on arterial roads across the city. Right now, there are arterial roads that have their speed limits reduced and the City of Toronto itself, on a local basis—the old City of Toronto and East York—have decided to lower speed limits across all of their streets. I will be asking for a report to be brought forward that proposes the lowering of speed limits on all arterial roads across the city. When I say all arterial roads, certainly many of them, if not all of them, are where a lot of these things are happening that I have been describing to you.

I will also be asking that report to brought forward to city council for the appropriate debate and approval and public input, so that we can see the establishment and introduction of more mid-block crossings, because it is clear that all people, but especially senior citizens and young people, need to have more places to cross the street in a city that is growing, so that they do not have to make the decision to either walk the 12 minutes or to cross the street in a manner that is unsafe.

I will be asking that report recommend appropriate road design changes which enhance safety on these arterial roads. Finally, I will be asking that the report contain a proposal to see us significantly increase the number of red-light cameras. We have installed a fair number and, in fact, a dramatically increased number of red light cameras which, I think as you know, are designed to deal with people who speed through, effectively, on a red light. They have proven to be effective.

When you see numbers like you see that trace the cause of death of so many people in the Scarborough numbers—and by the way, we are now analyzing the numbers for the rest of the city to look at the same thing, because there are differences in different parts of the city—you will understand why the red light cameras are an effective tool that we must use if we are going to reduce the number of preventable deaths. We simply have to do a better job of catching and penalizing those drivers who clearly disregard pedestrian safety and endanger others, quite frankly, by driving in a reckless manner.

That is also why I have been fighting very hard for automated speed enforcement on our roads. Last year, we began testing, as part of an overall regulatory approval process—

because this is something like so many things sometimes, unfortunately, that are under provincial regulation.

Part of what we have to do to reintroduce speed enforcement cameras in school zones and community safety zones is to test the technology, so that we can prove that it works. I think that is a fair requirement, regardless of whose regulation that is.

Last year, we began testing new speed cameras by rotating them around the city. The results were, to say the least, very concerning. A driver on Queen Street, for example—you are all familiar with Queen Street—clocked at 127 km/h. Because the cameras are only being tested, they cannot actually lead to the issuance of a ticket.

They are only being tested to make sure they work and to make sure we foolproof the technology, but they are clocking people. If you saw the thousands of people on some of these roads where we are testing around the city that are violating the speed limit, you, too, would be concerned because 127 km/h on Queen Street is quite a feat that we would not want to see repeated by anybody, anytime.

On Renforth Drive, the speed limit is 40 km/h where the test was going on. A driver was clocked at 202 km/h.

I will be pushing provincial regulators and our own staff to ensure that by the start of the next school year—this has been going on now. I asked for permission to introduce these speed cameras in Toronto, or reintroduce them, about two years ago. I understand the need to be careful in the way you reintroduce these things and in the way you test the technology and so on, but I will be pushing very hard to make sure that by the start of the next school year, which means September of this year, we are able to widely deploy speed enforcement cameras in school and community safety zones across the city because, simply put, we must put safety first.

I think we can, and we have to do more on these initiatives, today, that are going to be the subject matter of this report and action, and I am hoping for approval by the city council. I am counting on that. I believe the majority of Torontonians understand these are some of the changes we must make in order to make sure this remains a safe city.

As we continue to grow, and as we hopefully take steps forward on a number of fronts to make sure the city remains safe, I also want to make sure that we keep the city clean for generations to come, which brings me to the second initiative I want to talk about today.

Toronto is a beautiful city, as you all know, with a beautiful waterfront. Oftentimes, I think we undersell the beauty of our own city—the ravines we have, the fact we are on a lake that, I think, to all intents and purposes, it seems like an ocean. We always talk about how other cities in Canada are on the ocean, and we are sometimes envious of that, but I think our lakefront is beautiful. Lake Ontario, where our waterfront is, is the 13th largest body of freshwater in the world. We have to do all that we can to make sure that that lake, that precious asset that we have, and our entire waterfront, are protected. Just as governments took action in the past to address acid rain and smog days and other pollution, we have to be bold now and make changes so that our lake remains clean and safe. Right now, as you have probably read, but maybe not, when a major storm hits our city and they are hitting with increasing frequency, our wastewater system goes into overdrive to prevent major flooding.

As the water rushes in from the storms, our current system pushes wastewater overflow into the lake when it reaches a certain threshold. That prevents it from rushing back into the sewers and backing up into people's basements, quite frankly. Now, wastewater overflow is a polite phrase.

I could just stick with that at a lunch like this, but the bottom line is what that represents is stormwater combined with raw sewage. It is going into the lake when these storms occur. I believe that it is high time we acknowledge, faster than we were planning to acknowledge, that that represents an unacceptable choice, a choice between sewage-tainted water either being in basements or in Lake Ontario.

Given the current system, of course, we have ended up choosing the lake, so this tainted water goes into the lake.

That cannot continue if we value the lake as we should and if we want to protect and preserve it for future generations. I am going to bring forward a new, dramatically accelerated plan to put a stop to it. Again, I have to rely on the work of our professional public servants and the cooperation, which I am sure I will have, of our city councillors in doing this.

We have a plan now. You will be heartened to know that it was not just that people sat back and said let us not worry about it, but the present plan has us being able to say that wastewater containing raw sewage is as close to zero as it can get 20 years from now in 2038. If you saw the size and the scale of the work that needs to be done in order to reach that point of guarantee, you would understand it is going to take a long time. What I propose to do is to cut that 20-year time in half with a goal of ensuring that within 10 years, not 20, all of what flows into Lake Ontario will be free of sewage. I think this is a goal that a self-respecting, global city that is as admired as we are should set for itself and then should go about achieving. I think the important thing in this regard is to note that we have a plan in place. It is all laid out as to all the things that have to be done to get there by 2038. What it involves, really, is deciding on a way that we can accelerate that work, and we can.

I did not come here to make this commitment to you on my own behalf as Mayor to bring it forward before I consulted the experts who told me that it can be done. As with most things, it is a matter of will; it is a matter of the resources and pulling those closer in time to the present and just getting it done in the 10-year timeframe. I have also already begun discussions, because I think it is something in which the other governments should quite properly be a partner with us in making this happen, because it is as much a precious asset for Ontario and for Canada as it is for Toronto. I hope that those other governments will become our partners, and I hope that my colleagues on city council will share my desire to significantly speed up this important project.

The third initiative I want to address is my continued support that I referenced earlier and my encouragement of our businesses and our commitment to continue to strengthen the economy. I read last week, and I was proud to read it—not proud of myself or proud of the city council.

I was proud of the city that it achieved the highest number of people ever in the history of the city employed in the city of Toronto with an unemployment rate that is now down to 6.1%, and I hope we can take it down even further.

We have to continue to grow the economy and to see people invest and create jobs here in an ambitious, thoughtful and inspiring way, so that we can continue to draw not just the admiration, but, obviously, the investment and the job creation know-how of people from around the world and maintain that quality of life that I referred to earlier, which can only be financed through the creation of wealth in the private sector that the government can then hopefully, prudently, put to work by building the kind of infrastructure I have talked about today in providing the kinds of human services that our city is so proud to provide.

That quality of life will, of course, help us to continue to attract tourists to our great city, even in the winter months. In 2017, 44 million tourists came to Toronto.

A record year. I want to see us create more records under the leadership of this city council and other city councils in years to come because tourists also mean jobs.

They also mean good advertising for the city and they attract a lot of people who see the city, experience the city and decide they want to invest here. The very mention of winter caused a few grimaces. I could see around the room when I mentioned it earlier on and now, as we conclude what has been a difficult winter season. "Difficult"—actually, I am known for being relatively understated. I am known for being understated, but to describe it as "difficult" would be an understatement of some considerable magnitude. My staff told me I should crack a joke about snow removal at this point in the speech, but I think we need a few more warm days where you can feel the sun before any of those would be funny.

It is hard for us to think, in light of the winter we have just experienced, as a time of opportunity for us but I think it is time we started to do just that, to look at winter as an opportunity. It comes every year. It will continue to come every year. Cities like Montreal, Quebec City and Denver, just to cite three, have all embraced the winter and the potential for a lot more exciting outdoor events that are good for people who live here and also good for people who visit.

Why cannot we do something that will be enjoyed by us and by visitors, alike, who may not think of Toronto as a place to be in the winter? Because we do not give them any reason to think that way. I want Toronto to continue to attract tourists from around the world as we are doing, but I also want those tourists to come in increased numbers.

I think one of the ways we can do that is to make sure they come all year long. If you look at the numbers, of course, there are more people who visit here in the summer months than in the winter months. I do not believe that we should just limit the fun you can have or the perception of the fun you can have in Toronto to just the summer months.

I will be working with our city staff, again, with my council colleagues and with partners like Tourism Toronto, to significantly step up the pace of applications and initiatives to get more winter-focused events and festivals here because I think a lot of the reason why people come here in the summer is there is so much going on, all kinds of different things that you are familiar with. We will also be looking for more all-season patios. This is a concept that is not something we are going to invent here; it is something that is done elsewhere. We want to have more winter recreation activities in our own public spaces and public parks, events and places which make it more attractive to live in Toronto and to get through each winter when it comes and make it a more attractive place to visit. We are doing more of that here than we used to do, but there has to be more done.

Each winter, we can enjoy, for example—and some of you may have had this experience, as I have—the Bentway, that magnificent new park financed in part, thanks to the generosity of the Matthews family, which is underneath the Gardiner Expressway. It is literally packed with skaters, hundreds of skaters enjoying this unique, new public space and enjoying being outside in the winter. The creative buzz we see with the winter art installations on Woodbine

Beach—and Councillor Bradford was there for the opening—has been recognized by the New York Times.

I will bet you that there is a large number of people in this room who have never heard of it. It is a unique installation of artwork done by people from around the world who compete for the right to have their art shown on the beach in the middle of the winter, and people go there to see it and enjoy themselves on a winter day.

I want to make these kinds of places and events even better and create several more like them across the city.

It involves us, then, looking at a plan, in a planned and methodical way at how we can take advantage of the winter and make sure that we do things that other people are doing and that we should be doing to make it a more attractive place, as I said, to live, but also a more attractive place to visit.

At the same time as looking at the winter, I think it is high time we took a more in-depth look at the night economy. Toronto, like other global cities, is becoming a 24-hour city. It already may be one. For many people, it is a reality of the way they live and work. While that does raise some concerns that we have to address in tandem with an examination of the potential of the night economy, we cannot lose the opportunity that that represents or let it start to become a nuisance. Again, it is better for us to look at it in a planned and methodical way, including some of the consequences of a night-time economy as well as looking at the opportunity that it represents. The bottom line is that I think people expect us to work together on developing a balanced plan that takes account of the fact that we live here, but also that, increasingly, the city is a 24-hour city.

What I have outlined here today with three initiatives that I am going to be pursuing with all of the people that I have mentioned that will be my partners is just the start.

We have so much more that we want, as a city, and that we want for our city, and that we can achieve in the next four years and beyond. We have our work cut out for us on the major priorities of transit, housing, taxes and jobs, but also on some of these other challenges that I have made reference to, today. I think that if we work together, we can achieve great things in those priority areas, but also in the things that I am going to be adding to that list of important priorities in the weeks ahead. My approach to council leadership will also try to better reflect that commitment to working together.

Under the City of Toronto Act, as you know, we have a system where councillors have a tremendous amount of responsibility and accountability as individuals. The intent of the Act, I believe is to have City Hall function as a team.

If that is the case, then we need to work more as a team, which is why in this term, I will be taking a slightly different approach, by asking councillors from across the spectrum and across the city to work with me on individual files.

I have outlined three today that are files, and there are going to be more of those to come in the coming weeks.

I am going to ask, in each case, a councillor from across the city and across the spectrum to work with me, to partner with me, in advancing these plans, because it is not going to be as good a result if I try to do it myself; it is just going to be more effective to involve them as properly as they should be involved. I am confident that with respect and focus and collaboration and hard work, we can do more together than by any of us working alone, any councillor or any mayor, because it is amazing. It is amazing what we can achieve when we work together.

As I indicated, this will be the first of a series of announcements that I will be making in the coming weeks to set out some of these additional initiatives that I think we should and must undertake, as a city, to continue to move ourselves forward. Stay tuned.

There is more to come. That brings me to my last point: What this all means for our city in the long run. For me, that is fairly simple.

We want everything we have now and that includes addressing some of the challenges that we have now, because those are things we have now.

The challenges include, in particular, the challenge of disparity between the different parts of the city and some of the people who live here one from another, but we also want to have the things that we have now that are good about the city, but we want more of those, and we want better.

Toronto has always been a city where people from every culture, from every belief system, every background, every stage of life, every place of work, can find an accepting home, a place where they can pursue opportunity.

Some may joke—and I face these jokes regularly, including jokes about snow, in the rest of the country when I visit with some of my fellow big-city mayors.

They often joke that Toronto thinks it is the centre of the universe. You know what? There is a reason why we think well of our city because it is an absolutely amazing place.

That is subjectively measured by others who routinely find us among the best places to live in the world.

We continue, fortunately, to be a magnet for people from around the world who feel an accepting home here, a place of opportunity for them. When we succeed—and I passionately believe this as a proud Canadian—Ontario succeeds and Canada succeeds. This is the economic engine of Canada.

That does not mean that we cannot and should not aim even higher or that we can ever afford to be complacent about what we have achieved because there continues to be challenges in front of us, some of which I have addressed today and some of which I have not, and those will have to wait for another time.

I believe that working together, we can fix the things that need fixing. We can build what needs to be built.

We can introduce innovations and new ideas that the rest of the world will want to emulate.

We can make the changes, some of which I have talked about today, that the evidence suggests we should make now, as opposed to making them another time.

We can ensure that everyone has a roof over their heads, that everybody feels safe, that everybody has access to opportunity, which is fundamentally important to the health and well-being, not just of the economy, but of the society that we have built so carefully and so caringly here.

I believe we can do all these things in the best way possible. I think the best way possible is what I will call the "Toronto way," which means we are going to do it together.

We are going to do it together in that spirit of civility and consensus-building and partnership that I have talked about today, because I think if we do that, if we focus ourselves on that, there is nothing that can stop us from being one of the greatest cities in the world, which we already are. Staying there is not going to happen by accident.

I look forward to continuing to provide the leadership in the coming years to make sure that we can do just that which is to stay the best city in the best country in the world.

Thank you very much.

KE: Thank you, Mayor. I have one correction, too. I was only going 126 km on Queen Street, and not 127.

We would like to invite Joseph Mancinelli, form LiUNA, up here to give the thank you as our lead sponsor for today. Thank you.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Joseph Mancinelli, International Vice President and Regional Manager of Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA

Mayor Tory, members of the Empire Club, ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be with you here, today, not only as a sponsor, but also as a ratepayer in this wonderful city, in order to see the level of enthusiasm and optimism that was expressed here by Mayor John Tory.

Being the mayor of the largest city in the country, even at the best of times, is a daunting task for the Mayor and for city council, but there are so many challenges that our city here faces that, quite frankly, have to do with decades of downloading from the provincial and federal governments onto the municipal government—with respect to the lack of infrastructure spending and so many other issues.

It was so encouraging to hear that the agenda is to attack transportation infrastructure, housing, which is so important, and affordable housing, which is also so important, and safety for the citizens of this great city. It is so nice to see the way you embrace those challenges, which are pretty daunting and embrace them with, I think, a level of urgency and optimism as well. Thank you so much for your comments. Mayor Tory, we really enjoyed it and keep in mind, and as you say that we are all in this together.

We are. There are many of us in this room that are your partners in this challenge as well. Thank you, again.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thanks to all of you for coming today and supporting our event. We have a number of events coming up.

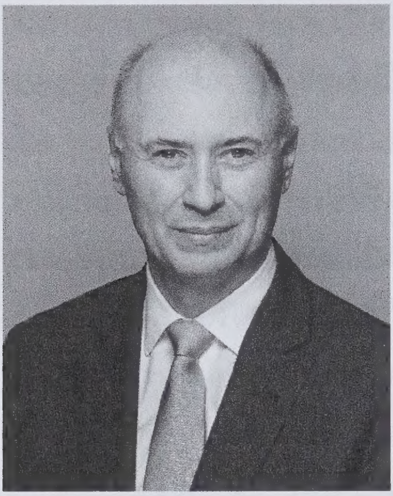
We will have the CEO of Bruce Power, Mike Rencheck here on Monday; on the 28th, we will have the Honourable Vic Fedeli, Ontario's Minister of Finance, prior to his first budget, which is going to be an amazing, huge event at the Convention Centre North.

I think there are only a few tables left for that one, and many other events.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming today. Thanks again to our sponsors, LiUNA, Waste Connections, OMERS.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents



MICHAEL RENCHECK

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
BRUCE POWER

WITH: NUCLEAR POWER: SECURING OUR FUTURE

Welcome Address, by Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Limited; Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

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March 25, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the King Edward Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you joining us through either webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present Mike Rencheck, President and Chief Executive Officer of Bruce Power, for today's topic, "Nuclear Power, Securing Our Future."

It is my pleasure, today, to welcome Mike Rencheck to the Empire Club of Canada.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

Mr. Michael Rencheck, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Power

Guests:

Ms. Jane Allen, Senior Vice-President, Strategy and Innovation, Hydro One

Mr. John Beck, Executive Chairman, Aecon Group Inc.

Ms. Traci Chambers, Family Home Visitor, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program

Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President, Municipal Property Assessment Corporation; President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Michael Kobzar, Director of Sales, Ontario, Siemens Canada; First Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Joseph Mancinelli, International Vice President & Regional Manager of Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA

Ms. Verity Sylvester, Vice President, CMC + CO; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Andrew Willis, Business Columnist for the "Report on Business," Globe and Mail

In doing research about Mike, I learned that Mike won an award as "The CEO Who Gets It," which must be about the best thing you could say about someone as a professional. I am sure everyone here would welcome an award like this from their peers—he or she gets it. Any day of the week that would be a great compliment to achieve.

For Mike, this award came from the National Safety Council, and it was in recognition of his commitment to worker health and safety, which makes a lot of sense—a leader who puts the team first, who puts safety first.

These are certainly the qualities of a CEO who gets it, which is why it is so great to have Mike here today because there is so much to understand about nuclear power, about its place in the energy supply mix in this province today and going forward. Of course, as a province, we have a long, proud history of nuclear energy. The Empire Club has a long, proud history of pulling together engaged citizens to talk about nuclear's place in the province. The discussion of nuclear power in Ontario goes back a long way. In 1944, a test reactor at Chalk River near Ottawa was the first nuclear reaction outside of the United States. Not long after that, in the 1960s, Bruce Nuclear Generation Station was built and has since underpinned Ontario's energy sector, providing reliable emissions-free, GHG-free power ever since.

Today, nearly one-third of Ontario's electricity is generated by Bruce Power, which is, today, also the largest nuclear plant in the world. Across the province on any given day, nuclear power provides as much as half of our electricity.

Nuclear energy has been key to moving away from coal.

As a speaker's club, a place that cares about the issues of the day, a place that sees politics up close and personal across this country, one fact that underscores the broad consensus around nuclear's benefits is that, left or right, conservative or liberal, pro-environment or pro-business, the vast majority agree that a stable, nuclear industry is important for Ontario. The sector represents more than $5 billion in annual business. It involves more than 800 companies and supports 60,000 jobs. It is no wonder the new Ford government today, like successive governments before it, has embraced the nuclear industry as a champion, as a key component of our energy and economic development plans.

We also know that Bruce Power will continue to be a bedrock for our economy through its life extension project.

That is why I am so pleased that Mike Rencheck is able to join us today. There is no one more qualified to tell us about the exciting developments that are taking place at Bruce Power and in the nuclear industry, more broadly.

Mike Rencheck is an engineer by training, but a leader by nature. He relies on more than four decades of experience in the industry to lead a team of more than 4,000 employees. Without further ado, ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome someone who gets it, Bruce Power's CEO, Mike Rencheck.

Mr. Mike Rencheck

Thank you, Mike. I appreciate it. Wow, what an introduction. He gave my whole speech. Very good.

Good afternoon. How many folks follow Wiarton Willie? Let us see some hands. Do we believe that the groundhog got it right this year? Look at this weather yesterday, and the sun is out. March is ending like a lamb. We are in a good way. I want to thank you for being here today. It is important for our industry that you all gather to hear about it.

We are doing so many positive things, and I want to talk about a few of those things today. It is my pleasure to be here. It is my pleasure to be here talking about the industry.

It is an important role that engages thousands of Ontarians every day. Every day, through their engagement, we secure a future of clean energy, clean air and medical isotopes. Talking about these benefits well into the future for many, many years to come is a privilege, and I take that privilege very seriously. With the program we have before us, today, our best days are ahead. They are not behind us. When we talk about a plant's first chain reaction in the 1940s and starting in the 1960s, the future is quite bright.

I am excited today, to update you on the business sector and the public on the developments that our company is leading. We have some very exciting news to share with you today on a number of fronts, on a number of issues, on a number of important topics that Ontarians care about.

However, before I do that, I want to share a video with you, so that you can see some pictures of what the nuclear industry entails, what makes it up, what makes the people of Bruce Power tick—how do they view themselves and their roles? Bringing it a little closer with some pictures may help some of the words align today. With that, I would like to start off with a video. If you could turn on the video, please.

[VIDEO.]

As you can see from the video, we have a lot of interesting innovations and developments underway. We are doing, today, the work of powering people's lives and laying the groundwork for a strong future. That is a strong future built on a strong economy. Earlier today, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce released a report on the impact that our Major Component Replacement has on Ontario and Canada, and that impact is significant. This is a key part of securing our role for the long term. The Major Component Replacement is a portion of our Life-Extension Program, and our Life-Extension Program has our units running all the way out to 2064. How old will you be in 2064? Think about it. The program that we talked about has been underway since 2016. It has been on time and on budget. After three years and nearly $1 billion invested, we are doing the work that we set out to do, effectively, cost-effectively, and delivering the results that we need to be able to add decades of life to the six reactors at Bruce Power, again, all the way to 2064 and beyond. Can you see that far? Can you see that far into the future and what it might entail?

I am pleased to report that this report went further into the Major Component Replacement part of the program, which is central to the Life Extension, and the Major Component Replacement will start in 2020. It starts in 2020, and it runs all the way out through the early 2030s.

We are set up for success with engineering nearing completion, having purchased all of the parts with many parts being delivered this year. We also have our construction partners ramping up and mobilizing to get ready to do the construction work. Together, these are all key factors in enabling success.

We are also working very closely and sharing the lessons learned with our partners at Ontario Power Generation at the Darlington Refurbishment. I am very proud of our peers, and I am very proud to report that that Refurbishment is going very well. Let us give a round of applause to the OPG people. The Chamber of Commerce concluded that our MCR Program, which runs to through the 2030s, increases Ontario's domestic product by \$4.8–\$7.1 billion annually. That is billion with a 'B', and Canada's GDP by \$5.2–\$7.8 billion. Up to \$2 billion in tax revenues will be realized by federal, provincial and municipal governments, enabling them to provide public services to the citizens of Ontario and Canada. Those are big numbers, staggering numbers. I encourage you to get the Chamber's report and read it, share it amongst your companies, and, if you would, post it out on social media. It is something that is not that well known, but, nonetheless, will carry the day for many years into the future. You see, the Ontario Chamber is the authority on economic issues in the province. Their support for us as a low-cost clean energy provider is important; their support for us as an economic driver of the province is important, and we are honoured to be able to have this type of support from the Chamber. Let us give Ontario Chamber a round of applause. One of the most important things we do in nuclear, though, is often not discussed. That is our role in the fight against cancer and disease. How many folks knew that nuclear energy was important to the medical communities? Let us see a show of hands. A few.

I am pleased to announce today that Bruce Power has completed our first harvest of medical-grade cobalt over the weekend. This is one aspect of our business and our industry that we have made medical isotopes for years, but we have been doing it in a very quiet manner. Canada has been and will remain a world leader in isotope production and supply. We will continue to do this for decades to come, thanks to the innovations that we are implementing at Bruce Power. We are realizing an historic advancement that marks our entry into medical isotopes that directly fight cancer.

The medical-grade cobalt will power the Gamma Knife, a technological advancement in brain cancer treatment that is far less invasive for patients, and it has achieved very good results. The Gamma Knife technology is another technology innovated right here in Ontario, in a London hospital, and it is now advanced throughout the world. About 70,000 patients a year undergo treatment through the Gamma Knife.

Bruce Power began producing the medical-grade isotopes starting in 2016, because of a shortage in the marketplace due to the impending 2018 closure of the National Research Universal reactor at Chalk River. When the NRU closed, the world's medical community was incredibly worried that these isotopes supplies would simply run out, and there would be no alternatives available that would be as affordable as what we could make it. Without Bruce Power's involvement, there would be a shortage of the isotope medical-grade Cobalt-60, putting lives in danger.

By starting this process in 2016 our innovations have now enabled the production when that supply is needed most: Right now and today. Medical grade Cobalt-60 will be in addition to the production of Cobalt-60 that we have made for decades. The Cobalt-60 that we make helps sterilize 40% of the world's single-use medical devices, such as gloves, syringes, masks and gowns. How many folks have ever been to the dentist or a surgery? Chances are that an isotope from Bruce Power sterilized the equipment that were used in those procedures. It comes from right here in Ontario. I often ask What does a 40% mean?

Our good friends in Nordion have done some calculations, and they say what it translates to is about 100 billion syringes or about 10 billion pairs of surgical gloves, to put that in context. It is quite an impact we have. With our scale, our isotopes are affordable, and we can protect people around the world by fighting disease and treating cancer. Sometimes we talk about these things in the abstract.

We should never lose sight of the fact that we are improving people's lives. I want to share a story with you.

It makes it real, and it makes it personal. Can you turn on the video, please?

[VIDEO.]

Sometimes seeing is more important than hearing. I want to thank Traci for coming here, today. She is here with us.

I would ask her to come up and say a few words on the treatments. Traci Chambers.

TC: It was nice to see my backyard looking so green and colourful, and I hope to see that again soon. There is not much more that I can say that the video did not already say, but I am so grateful that I was able to receive this treatment and to Bruce Power for making that happen and for producing these medical isotopes—thank you to Dr. Fred Gentili and his team at the Gamma Knife Centre at Toronto Western and also to the Brain Tumour Foundation. My treatment was last year.

Within weeks, I was able to carry on and live a successful life. I was back exercising, took a much-needed cycling trip in Prince Edward County and then back to work. Thank you so much.

MR: Traci, thank you so much for sharing that with us.

I want to recognize the great work that the Brain Tumour Foundation also does. We look forward to continuing our work with you on the Brain Tumour Foundation for many years in the future and making sure that treatments are available and affordable for the citizens of Ontario and the citizens of Canada.

Before I leave that topic on isotopes, I just have to say one thing. They come with a great pair of socks.

If you want to help support Cobalt-60 use and the Brain Tumour Foundation, you can see some of our folks there, and they will gladly put you in touch with a Brain Tumour Foundation for a donation, and then we can get you a pair of Cobalt-60 socks. They are all the latest fashion rage. Trust me. We believe that our medical-grade Cobalt-60 can be used to fight breast cancer as well, and we are working very diligently through an organization that we created to partner with different medical communities in bringing technologies from North America to here, in Canada, and advancing them. As we speak, we think we can do these things in the coming years. It is not just something that is off in the distant future. We can make these things a reality by working together today. We can make medical treatments more affordable and accessible for many people. We are bringing the strength of Canadian innovation to this. We are not just going to stop at Cobalt-60. As we look at different isotopes throughout the world, there is one thing assured that there is growing need for the treatment and more and more access will be needed. With the scale that Bruce Power offers and our ability to produce the isotopes, we can make them in a manner where it is not only plentiful, but affordable. Simply put, nuclear power has been and will continue to quietly protect and advance human health. We save lives every day. Aside from these two recent developments, nuclear power has many day-to-day qualities that are also not very well known to the public. For example, Bruce Power generates 30% of the energy for Ontario at 30% less than the average cost to generate. That is four times the power produced by Niagara Falls or the equivalent of powering about 5 million homes.

We are a low-cost generator, so despite what the Clean Air Alliance—so they call themselves—likes to say, you can just ask the Ontario Energy Board, the Financial Accountability Office, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters; the list goes on and on, and the numbers speak for themselves. We are a low-cost producer, and we will be for many decades to come. Finally, I want to end on a note that is very close to home for us in Bruce County, and that is our regional rural economy in Bruce, Grey and Huron Counties. One of the first things I did as CEO of Bruce Power was to partner with Bruce County, Grey and Huron and all of our communities to launch an economic development initiative.

Since then, approximately 50 of our suppliers have moved into the area, and we have created upwards of 300 small businesses in the three counties in the last two years.

That is equivalent of about 100 million in building permits in the area and around 10,000 housing units.

This recognizes that to be successful, we must connect the nuclear ecosystem in Ontario with a strong local presence.

Supporting companies have opened satellite offices and many of them are here today, and I want to personally thank you for all of that—creating hundreds of jobs, increasing the local tax base and providing a welcome investment into the non-nuclear portions of our communities.

This is a made-in-Canada solution, and it is a made-in-Ontario solution. Taken together, the nuclear industry's impact, economically, is staggering. Yet, very few people realize that a strong nuclear sector means high-quality jobs throughout the province, improved quality of life for Ontarians, and it lasts for decades. Can you see all the way to 2064? By and large, the nuclear industry supports about 60,000 jobs.

Just through the Refurbishment, we will create 22,000 direct and indirect jobs. Those will be sustained year in and year out for as long as the Major Component Replacement Program is underway.

In closing, nuclear energy is part of our past; it is part of our present; and it will be part of our future, providing clean, reliable, affordable electricity, enabling clean air energy and producing medical isotopes that not only fight disease, but they save people's lives. We power your lives, and, simply put, we power more for less. I want to thank you for coming today, and I look forward to participating in a fireside chat. Michael, thank you very much.

MVS: I want to thank Mike, and I want to thank Traci.

We think about nuclear power so much when we think of it in terms of generation, but to understand a little bit more about the isotope part and the great work the industry is doing is great.

Without further ado, we have brought up Andrew Willis from the Globe and Mail who is going to lead a little fireside chat. Maybe I will just turn it over to you now, Andrew. Thank you.

Fireside Chat: Mr. Mike Rencheck with Mr. Andrew Willis

AW: Mike, that was a wonderful speech. Traci, thank you very much for bringing home the work that Bruce Power does.

That was very, very touching. Mike, I have to tell you, actually, I have first-hand experience with Bruce Power, as I imagine some of you in this room do.

My family owns a cottage on the shores of Lake Huron, not that far south of your facilities. If any of you ever make that drive to Lake Huron, either going northwest out of Toronto or going due west out of Toronto, I would suggest you would see both the present, which is the Bruce facility, but also the future of Ontario power, because that whole drive is through windmills. There are massive wind farms along Lake Huron, right around Bruce Power.

What I would do to start out is just to get you to talk a little bit, Mike, about the supply mix in Ontario and how Bruce Power and nuclear energy would compete and fit in a future, which also features renewable technology and other smaller-scale technologies.

MR: Let us talk about that for a little bit from a perspective of energy affordability. When we look at power, Bruce Power generates about 30% of the energy at 30% less than the average residential cost. When you look at the Ontario Energy Board numbers, solar is at about 51¢ kw/h; gas is at about 20¢; wind is at about 16¢ kw/h; and Bruce Power is at about 7¢, with hydro-electric at about 6¢. Effectively, we are the low-cost producer in the province. When you look at your electric bill, you will say What makes up the electric bill? How many people say that? When you think about it, we supply, totally, about 30%–40% of the energy. We are about 10% of the electric bill cost. When you look at some of the renewables like wind and solar, they are supplying less than 10% of the energy, but they are making up roughly 40% of the cost of that electric bill. As we look it, Andrew, we think not only in the near term do we have our place of anchoring low-cost power for the province for all the citizens, but we see that anchor staying stable and predictable for the long term.

In our plants, we have done a number of innovations over the years. It is more than just electricity.

We talked about the isotopes, but we are also able to load follow with our plants. In other words, we can swing the output around our plants roughly 2,000 to 2,600 megawatts in a very short period to accommodate different types of technologies that are entering the grid. We are one of the only nuclear plants in North America that can do that. I know there are many in Europe that are underway, but we see our fit and our practice long term. We see the future with a very solid, reliable, affordable base load energy that is able to move and adapt, innovate and become more than just an electric supply.

There are not very many other technologies, if any that can generate power and medical isotopes at the same time. It is like walking and chewing gum, right. Quite frankly, we see the future that way. We see the future as not just an energy product, but a product that really will enable the lives of citizens far and wide.

AW: Obviously, in Ontario, the price of electricity has been a hot-button political issue, and that is more a residential thing. You have also got a lot of industrial companies in this province that not only look at price, but also with the reliability of the system. Do you want to just talk for a moment about other facets, like what are you hearing from industrial customers as they think about the electrical supply system and the power situation in Ontario?

MR: Yes, they wish their power could come directly from Bruce Power. At 6.6¢, it looks really bright for them as an industrial customer, but, when you see the ability to compete, or I think when you get into the electric system, I think energy and being plentiful and reliable makes a difference in terms of where companies are choosing to come. I know, as we look at our power coming out of Bruce, it is 24/7, 365. In other words, the units are not depending on when the sun shines or when the wind blows. It simply is a matter of clean energy online, full time, all the time. It is something that can be predictable, and it is something that can be patterned and built into a business plan.

AW: I am going to get you to talk for a minute about the Cobalt-60 initiative because, I know for me and I think for a lot of people in this room, the role that Bruce Power plays in medical isotopes is probably relatively new.

Can you talk for a moment about whether these products are unique to Bruce Power, and are there other isotopes, other business lines in medical isotopes that you are going to be looking at getting into?

MR: Yes, very much. It is really not new.

We have been making Cobalt-60—Low Specific Activity Cobalt-60—with our friends at OPG for many years. It is a little known fact, but Canada has an 80% market share through a company called Nordion—and I saw Richard here this morning—that is based out of Ottawa. We have been able to have this position in the world marketplace for decades. What caused the shortage was the shutdown of the NRU reactor due to just end of life. We made some innovations and have been able to take cobalt and actually upgrade it to a medical-grade cobalt. We still make the low specific activity supply, and now we are making the high specific activity supply.

That is a new venture for us. As we look at our source with the innovation, we think we can put delivery systems into place that make different isotopes for many years to come. I know our friends at OPG are working on isotopes that are different than cobalt, and we are in the process now at looking at different isotopes as well. These can be businesses that are launched locally and set up right here in Ontario.

AW: One of the other things you talked about, Mike, was the opportunity to put a lot of people to work on the refurbishment of your systems and also just on running Bruce Power. I happen to have a daughter who is in science, technology, engineering, math, the STEM cells, in university. I hope she is working for you in a couple of years' time, but can you just talk a little bit about skilled trades and about engineering graduates, and if you could even reflect a little bit on what you are seeing in terms of university graduates right now in Canada and in the States and what you are going to need over time and how your need for talent jives with what the universities are producing?

MR: That is a multifaceted question, but let us start with the trades. University is not for everyone. Oftentimes, when you go through high school, you really do not know what you want to do as an adolescent, and the schools tend to try to channel the kids off to university.

The trades are a wonderful career. We see that growing here in Ontario for many decades to come.

With our construction program underway, we will talk about a construction period that starts in 2020 and goes through the early mid-2030s, but then it does not stop there. It keeps going all the way up through 2045 with the renewal and life extension of the units. If you are a 20-year-old today starting in the industry, you will be nearly my age by the time you are done with the Bruce site. That is a career; that is not a job.

That is a career. The opportunities are abound. We are doing a lot of work with local colleges, and we are looking to bring high schoolers into the trades program. I have been working very heavily with the Building Trades Union, the Power Workers' Union, and also the society from the aspect of engineering.

We have a lot of outreach going on in the engineering areas, especially, with a lot of the local universities here, in Ontario. I would say we probably hire anywhere from 300–400 technical engineers a year just in our company. As I look out to the audience, and I see all of our suppliers—we do business with about 200 suppliers, and then each of them does business with anywhere from 10–100 other sub-suppliers, so that net is quite broad in terms of the number of jobs. When we look at it incrementally from a study perspective, we believe we are creating somewhere around 22,000 new direct and indirect jobs each year, with about 60,000 people in the industry. There is quite an opportunity to be employed in the nuclear industry in the near term, but also for the long term.

AW: Thanks, and I will encourage my daughter. One of the other things is that you mentioned the Power Workers' Union. For those of you who do not know the structure of Bruce Power's ownership, it is quite unique.

You have got the OMERS Pension Plan as a shareholder and TransCanada, the big Alberta utility, but the Power Workers' Union and the Professional Engineers are significant equity holders in your company. At the risk of getting you to talk about your bosses, can you just reflect for a moment on what it means to have employee ownership to the degree you have where there are significant stakeholders in your company?

MR: Yes, sure. A number of them are in the audience here today, too. We love the Power Workers' Union, and we love the society. They are the people that power our organization. Having them as owners makes a real difference. It aligns our objectives and our priorities, for the most part, on how we proceed forward with business. I think it is just the structure, too, of our public-private partnership where if we were a public entity, sometimes some things become overburdened and a little inefficient, whereas other times in the purer private sector, sometimes the priorities get skewed in a direction that is a little different. Having our foot in both worlds with that partnership creates a synergy around—we lock in on a long-term goal.

We are able to have a longer term focus, not only for the outcomes of our owners, but for our employees, for the communities and for the province. It is a really good fit, and it is great to have them as partners.

AW: If I can go big picture on you for a moment, the big debate of our times, I think, is how we, as leaders and how we, as a generation, deal with climate change. Obviously, the nuclear industry—although, you mentioned in your remarks that occasionally there is some noise around it—is now very much a part of the conversation, particularly, in the United States, on how we combat climate change. Can you just develop for a moment what role you think Bruce Power and the nuclear industry, in general, can play in dealing with climate change?

MR: First of all, with a nuclear power plant, you have zero emissions, effectively. They are so small or un-measurable. In Ontario, this is another one of these little-known facts, Ontario is the world leader in CO_2emissions from the electric sector. How many folks knew that? A few. We are the world leader.

If someone said Germany or California, you would probably go, "Oh, that makes sense." Would it surprise you that Ontario is about three to four times less than California in terms of carbon intensity in the electric sector and then orders of magnitude less than Germany? What powers that? Here, in Ontario, 60% of the power comes from nuclear; about 20, 25% comes from hydro, and you get about 10% from other clean sources like wind and solar. We are a very clean province with a very clean electric sector. As we look forward to growing demands for energy—like how many folks have these little devices called cell phones?

How many folks are looking at cars that operate either in a hybrid mode with gasoline and batteries?

How many of you have industrial plants that you are shifting from thermal cycles to electrification, because it is more efficient and more effective and cheaper to operate? When I look at the need for a clean energy future that is affordable and reliable, I think you will see nuclear taking part in that conversation more broadly here in Canada and throughout the world.

I think its position as a clean energy source cannot be ignored as we look and think through climate change. It is too important.

AW: Thanks. The way this is structured is this is your meeting as much as it is my meeting. I do not get to ask all the questions. We do have, I believe, two microphones in the crowd right now. If any of you would like to pose a question to Mike or make an observation, obviously, you would be welcome to do so. Please, reach out. If you are thinking about that, I will throw one more question your way, Mike, because I know we are reaching our time limit on our lunch. As I mentioned a moment ago, you have got a private sector ownership structure with the four partners that make up your shareholders.

There are two large facilities in Ontario, Darlington and Pickering, which are owned by OPG, so, effectively, they are government controlled. I am going to guess from your chair, you like your ownership structure. Can you talk just generally about the difference between a private company working in the nuclear sector versus government ownership, and do you have any suggestions about what this government can do with Darlington and Pickering?

MR: First, let us talk about OPG. They are great partners. We share so many things with Ontario Power Generation. Actually, Ontario Power Generation owns our site, and we lease it from them. We share innovations and technologies not just around nuclear operation, but also through some of our business processes. We actually have a meeting where we hold monthly—kind of a joint staff meetings—on Ken Hartwick's direct reports and my direct reports. We go through different areas of the business to understand best practices and lessons learned and how we can make the industry more efficient—not only more efficient, though. It is also a product of being able to introduce new technologies and innovations. We have people that are working on artificial intelligence, isotopes, 3-D printing, robotics, all the things that you would look at and think, "Wow, this is pretty advanced and sophisticated." The nice part about it is we are doing it right here in Ontario.

We have different sub-suppliers and different companies that are working with us to create these next generations of technologies that we are putting into our plants, but then also we are creating an external export market for them, such that the companies can sell these technologies elsewhere and abroad.

When I look at that partnership, I think it is a good fit with us. OPG has the site. They maintain the site. We have a good working relationship. We look for that to last for many years to come.

Questions & Answers

AW: Thanks very much. I have thrown it open to the floor.

Are there any questions that anybody would like to pose to Mike?

Q: Thank you. As you say, I think most people in Ontario, certainly most people in this room, would agree that nuclear power is part of the solution when it comes to greenhouse gases. The way I look at the country is Eastern Canada hydro already has a solution to GHG-free power, but Western Canada needs a solution. The perception in Western Canada is different. They are not necessarily favourable to nuclear power. I am sure you have seen that.

If you could just speak to that. Is that an opportunity for Bruce Power or the nuclear sector, in general?

MR: Yes, let us talk about that. I have seen that a lot in my career where people, no matter what the technology is, are afraid of what they do not know about. Folks tend to plug the negative in when there is not a narrative or enough information available. What we find is that, when you sit down and talk to folks about the benefits and the realities and when you really take them to a facility to look at one, their minds often change.

It is a subtle shift, and, when you look at how we are combatting climate change, if we have any hope of dealing with it, we are going to have to get past the stigmas of the past. When I look generationally at our workforce, we have about 35% to almost 40% of our workforce under the age of 35. That generation, when they look at nuclear power, have come into the industry because many of them consider themselves environmentalists. I think you will see more and more of that taking hold and taking root as time goes on.

I think the benefits far outweigh the issues. I think if you look at any technology, there is no one single answer, and the technologies all often have their downsides. I think when you look at nuclear power, the upside is far more up than down. I think that paints a bright future. Someday, we will look at being out west with maybe small modular reactors and a fleet of them that can be manufactured right here in Ontario, but also in other places throughout Canada, like our good friends at NB Power—New Brunswick—looking to create a small modular reactor ecosystem there.

I think time heals, and with what we need in terms of clean energy, if we are going to continue to have prosperity, we are going to need nuclear power and all other sources of clean energy. I see a bright future.

AW: Thanks, Mike. Any other questions from the floor?

If not, I think I will wrap up this chat. Thank you very, very much, Mike. Thank you all very much.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Joseph Mancinelli, International Vice President and Regional Manager of Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA

Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the Empire Club, ladies and gentlemen and Michael.

I have had the pleasure of hearing Michael speak in the past. In fact, just a few short months ago, he attended LiUNA's conference in Florida where a very small group of 1,200 people had a chance to listen to Michael, a very interesting speaker and a very progressive leader, one that not only leads the largest nuclear facility in the world, but there are so many progressive things that are being done by Bruce Power under his leadership.

Very interesting here, today, to hear about all of the work that is going to be done over the several years at Bruce Power that affects 22,000 workers there.

I represent 120,000 workers. We are looking forward to working very closely with Bruce Power on that multi-year initiative. Most importantly, in terms of the isotopes and the work that is being done that affects so many lives and so many people, I know that looking at this room and knowing the statistics, I would guarantee that every family has been affected in one way or another by cancer.

And the very important effects of using these isotopes and cobalt may change the lives of so many people.

Michael, thank you so much for being with us here, today.

We really appreciate your comments, and we appreciate your presentation. Keep up the great work, and thanks for keeping the lights on. Thank you.

Concluding Remarks, by Mike Van Soelen

Wonderful. Thank you very much. We ask you to look ahead to other events that are coming up. For those who have tickets already—because these two are sold out—we will have the Honourable Vic Fedeli joining the Empire Club on the 28th, and we will have Dan Snow, in conversation with Peter Mansbridge on April 23rd.

There will be other events coming out. Please, look them up on our website. Stay tuned for other events. Thank you for joining us, today.

The meeting is adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

THE HONOURABLE
VIC FEDELI

ONTARIO'S MINISTER
OF FINANCE,

RESTORING TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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March 28, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you just joining us through our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present the Honourable Vic Fedeli for today's topic, "Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

The Honourable Vic Fedeli, Ontario's Minister of Finance

Guests:

Ms. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government and External Affairs, Waste Connections of Canada

The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of Ontario's Treasury Board; Past Speaker at Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Jack Carr, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto

Ms. Shurjeel Choudhri, Senior Vice President and Head, Medical and Scientific Affairs, Bayer Inc.

Mr. Pat Dalzell, Director, Government and Stakeholder Relations – Corporate Affairs, Bruce Power

Ms. Jackie Dean, Chief Financial Officer, Music Canada

Mr. Doug Downey, MPP (Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte), Parliamentary Assistant to Ontario's Minister of Finance

Mr. Chris Halyk, President, Janssen

Mr. John Koopman, Consultant, Spencer Stuart; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Sean Morrison, President-Elect, Ontario Real Estate Association

Mr. Greg Orencsak, Deputy Minister, Ontario Ministry of Finance

Mr. Anthony Primerano, Director, Government Relations, LiUNAMr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Ltd., Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Carol Wilding, President and Chief Executive Officer, CPA Ontario

Budget day and the immediate weeks before and after it are one of the few times a year when Ontarians pay close attention to the government and its decisions. After spending months meeting with stakeholders and colleagues, the minister has the difficult job of combining more than 150 billion dollars' worth of income and expenses into one thick document that represents both the government's fiscal plan and a strategic plan for public policy initiatives.

The minister must balance the demands of investing and stimulating the needs to be fiscally prudent and has to cater to many different audiences, from Main Street to Bay Street, from ratings agencies to labour organizations, from small businesses to large corporations and from influencers to individual voters.

Ontario's economy is large, diverse and complicated. Like many western economies, we are facing a significant set of challenges, an aging population with increased health care needs, the impact of globalization and the emergence of markets that present export opportunities, but also competition and so on.

The finance minister has to understand these challenges in these groups, weigh options and make tough decisions. If that was not enough, he or she will be judged on whether the budget is noteworthy and what kind of job they did in selling it afterwards. For anyone here who has worked on a provincial budget, you know that is a lot of pressure.

Minister, your turn on the pressure cooker is coming up on April 11th, and we all look forward to that. The first budget of a new finance minister in a new government is a significant one. The fact that 750 individuals have gathered here today at the Empire Club of Canada to read the tea leaves is proof of that.

Similarly, on May 5th, 2006, the Empire Club hosted a speech from the new minister of finance of Canada, who was once a former Ontario finance minister. In his speech, the late Minister Jim Flaherty said, "Public life is not only about debating policies, election campaigns and differing views of our national, provincial and local priorities.

Public life is about reflecting the essence of the objective economic and daily realities in the lives of our fellow Canadians, the way we work; the way we live; the way we care for those we love; and to reach out to a brighter tomorrow for our families, communities, province and country."

The implication is the government's budget is both a representation of society and economy as it used today and its vision for how those can be strengthened. On April 11th, Minister Fedeli will deliver not just a fiscal update but his government vision for the future. I know I am not alone in saying we all look forward to that and what you have to say today. Let us get started. Minister Fedeli was born and raised in North Bay. His grandparents came to Ontario from Italy with ambitions of a far better life and more opportunity for their young family. In his twenties he opened his own advertising agency. As a young entrepreneur, he developed the company into a global agency doing work all over the world and had become one of the country's 50 "Best Places to Work in Canada." In 1992, Vic sold the firm and devoted the next 11 years to work in nonprofit ventures. In 2003, Vic was elected Mayor of North Bay in a landslide. After more than a decade in municipal politics, Vic was elected as MPP for Nipissing. He served as Energy and Finance Critic in the Official Opposition Shadow Cabinet.

He was re-elected in 2018 and was appointed cabinet chair to his current position as Ontario's minister of finance.

Please, welcome and put your hands together for the Honourable Vic Fedeli.

The Honourable Vic Fideli

Thank you very much, Kent. No pressure there with those comments on the things that you are going to expect to see on April 11th. Thanks, Kent, I think.

It is great to be here. Everyone, thank you all for being here, all 750 of you. Thank you very, very much for being here. It is great to be here with my cabinet colleague, who is about to take a photograph, Peter Bethlenfalvy, the President of the Treasury Board. Peter. Our Parliamentary Assistant, Doug Downey, who is here as well. Doug, thank you very much for your great work. We have Greg Orencsak, the Deputy Minister of Finance. It is great to have you here as well, Greg, you and your team who are here today. We have many of us from our side as well. Dean French, Premier Ford's Chief of Staff is here; Dan Miles, my Chief of Staff is here; and so many of our staff are all here. Cabinet ministers Caroline Mulroney, Christine Elliott, Todd Smith are also here. There are about a dozen caucus colleagues who are here as well. Who is minding the ship while we are all down here? I am starting to worry about that.

Mind you, I think we have about enough to be quorum here as well, so we can take it over. We have many other elected officials at all levels of government who are here and some former elected officials, I understand, who are here. Thank you all.

This is such a spectacular turnout. We deeply appreciate it that you took the time to come today.

Our team at Finance, as you call well imagine, is totally consumed with delivering our government's first budget set to be released on April 11th.

[Remarks in French.] Notre équipe au ministre des Finances, travailler sans relâché à préparer le premier budget de notre gouvernement qui sera déposé le 11 avril.

Budget 2019 will be a thoughtful, measured, and forward-looking plan with four specific objectives, restoring fiscal balance in a responsible and sustainable manner, protecting what matters most: healthcare, education and other critical public services, making Ontario Open for Business and Open for Jobs and always putting people first.

When we got elected, Premier Ford gave every one of us this desk plaque—very simple: "For the People." This is not a bumper sticker. This sits on our desks. Mine sits between my BlackBerry and my computer. Every time I pick up that phone to make a call or to answer a call, or every time I am about to hit the send button on my computer, what has to go through our minds is "What I am about to do, is that for the people?" That is why Premier Ford gave us these, as a constant reminder who we work for and everything we do: We work for the people. Budget 2019 will build on the 200 initiatives our government has implemented over the last nine months. Even the word 'quick' does not quite capture our government's pace so far. For the Star Trek fans in the audience, you know that we have been moving at warp speed. From day one, we have put the people first and put more money in people's pockets. We cancelled the job-killing cap-and-trade carbon tax, saving businesses $880 million this year alone and put $260 back in the pockets of every household. We cut 4.3¢ off of a litre of gas at the pumps, your home heating fuel, and so on such that, for everything you buy, the price was affected.

All that, sadly, of course, is about to change on Monday morning when the federal government imposes their carbon tax here in Ontario. Sadly, that will all change. We have gone to the extent where we have frozen all kinds of administrative and licensing fees for hunting, fishing, driving, vehicle registration and others. We have introduced the most progressive income tax cuts for low-income workers in a generation. Our critics—I know they hate hearing that one. It is the LIFT, the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit; 1.1 million people in our province benefit from this tax credit. Minimum wage earners in Ontario will pay no provincial income tax at all. Our government has started to clean up the mess at Hydro.

Led by the Honourable Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, we cancelled 758 wasteful and expensive energy projects, saving ratepayers $790 million on their hydro bills.

He did away with the Green Energy Act to help further reduce bills for families and businesses.

Our government is actively working to create and protect jobs. We are cutting red tape and reducing the burden for business, so they can thrive in Ontario.

Thank you to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Todd Smith. We lowered the taxes on Ontario employers who make capital investments in machinery and equipment through the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance, and those measures parallel the federal government's.

This encourages greater business investment and job creation in Ontario.

We are standing up for Ontario business and families by fighting with everything we have got. We are fighting the federal Liberals' job-killing carbon tax which, as I said, will hit your bills on Monday, April 1st. In fact, following last week's federal budget, we expressed our disappointment about several initiatives, including the Liberal government's refusal to repeal this ill-conceived carbon tax plan.

Without question, it will increase the price of everything we buy, including gasoline, groceries and every other staple. As a result, we will redouble our efforts to use every tool at our disposal to fight this job-killing carbon tax on behalf of every individual, every family and every business in Ontario. Our government will continue to strengthen the things that matter the most to Ontario families, like health care. We have already taken decisive steps to curb hallway health care and expand long-term beds. Our Minister of Health, Christine Elliott, is here today and she has recently announced that 15,000 new, long-term beds are coming online over the next five years, and we are upgrading 15,000 older long-term beds to modern design standards. Yes, it is beautiful, Christine. It is beautiful work. As well, we have added 1,100 additional beds and spaces in hospitals and in the communities to reduce pressures on our emergency rooms. Led by Minister Elliott, our government is building a public healthcare system, centred around the patient and redirecting money to front-line services, where it belongs, to improve patient experience and provide better and connected care. We are restoring accountability, sustainability and trust, not only in the health care system, but also in our finances.

Through the report of the Independent Financial Commission of Inquiry, we learned the previous government left Ontario a massive $15 billion deficit. Friends, the previous government was spending $40 million a day more than they took in. The report uncovered the ugly truth of how the previous government continually and systematically abused our collective trust. They wasted precious resources and recklessly spent the province to the brink of a fiscal cliff.

The fiscal mess we inherited from the previous government cannot be overstated. All of us are now seeing the results of 15 years of fiscal mismanagement. Their approach was unsustainable, irresponsible and, quite frankly, put our children, your children's futures at risk. Again, I have to say this again: The previous government was spending $40 million a day more than they took in. Much of that was for day-to-day expenses of government. This has led to a large structural deficit and a massive public debt amounting to more than one-third of a trillion dollars. Think about this for a second. That is 346 with nine zeros behind it.

Ontario is the most indebted sub-national government on the entire planet. Interest payments on debt are the fourth largest line item in the budget after health care, education and social services. Every single dollar spent on interest—never mind the debt—means one less dollar going to our hospitals, our schools and our critical infrastructure.

These are staggering numbers. They represent a lost opportunity to our province, a fiscal albatross around the neck of future generations and a sad situation that leaves Ontario extremely vulnerable to any economic downturn.

These debt figures are not just concerns to economists, politicians and those of us in this room. When members of our cabinet and our caucus toured Ontario during the pre-budget consultations, we heard it loud and clear, whether it was from the farmer in Oxford County or the low-income senior living on a fixed income in Thunder Bay, people are genuinely worried about Ontario's growing mountain of debt. They know that this is an unacceptable legacy to leave to future generations, to our children, our grandchildren and their children. They understand that proper management of public finances is not just a fiscal or an economic imperative. This is a moral imperative. In that light, let me make something clear. Contrary to what our opponents would have you believe, our approach to restoring balance to Ontario's books will be measured and thoughtful. We will not balance the budget at the expense of our critical programs. We will not make life harder for families in the province by raising taxes. In everything we do, we continue to put the people first, and we mean that. The people of Ontario expect us to protect what matters most to them. They expect us to protect and to continue to strengthen public health care. They expect us to protect and enhance public education system. They expect us to protect those social services that support the most vulnerable in our society. Our government is putting people first. We are putting people at the centre of every single government decision we make—every parent with a child in school; every person with an aging loved one in a long-term care home; every commuter who must navigate through Ontario's clogged highways, jammed transit systems or poorly maintained rural roads; every family who wants to make sure police, paramedics, firefighters and emergency services are there when and where people need them. That is what we are standing here to tell you today.

Paying for all this depends on us, first and foremost, to get Ontario's books in order. If we choose to ignore this problem, as the Liberals, supported by the NDP, have done in the past, then our health care, our education and our critical social services will indeed be put at risk. If we fail to act now, if we do not get our spending under control, we will not be able to protect the public services we all rely on each and every day. Balancing the budget, therefore, is not an objective simply driven by ideology. It is the first crucial step to ensuring our hospitals, our schools, and other critical services have the sustainable funding that they need now and for years to come. In the nine short months, our government immediately set out to address the fiscal mess to get runaway spending under control and put Ontario on a path to balance.

We worked quickly to drive efficiencies, whether it was reforming OHIP+ or something as simple as removing unused landlines and fax machines. We found immediate ways to reduce costs and make programs and services more efficient and more people-focused, for the people.

As you will see on April 11th, our government plans to balance Ontario's budget in a reasonable and responsible manner. This will be the direct result of our efforts to spend smarter, to work smarter, all while protecting front-line jobs. We have an opportunity to break down silos in government, embrace new technologies, new ways of thinking and protect and strengthen the things that matter most, and, our friends, the early results show us that our plan is working. By December 31st, Ontario's inherited deficit was lowered from $15 billion to $13.5 billion.

This was achieved through a combination of identified savings, stronger economic activity and a new way of thinking to deliver better value for money. In addition, there are very encouraging signs that business confidence is up, resulting in investments. They are returning to the Province of Ontario since June. We have added 132,000 net new jobs as a direct result of our government's policies. That is a fact well worth celebrating.

[Remarks in French.] Comme le Premier Ministre Ford nous le rappelle sans cesse, l'Ontario est, de nouveaux, ouvert aux affaires et a l'emplois.

What I mean to say is as Premier Ford continually reminds everyone incessantly is Ontario is, once again, Open for Business and Open for Jobs.

Caroline, I was thinking of you when I was reading my French and saying, "She is going to kill me; I know that." It made me nervous. We will continue to drive efficiencies in government and promote job creation to strengthen both our finances and our economy.

You have our word that Budget 2019 will present a plan to restore balance in a responsible and reasonable manner, reduce the debt burden and instill trust and accountability in our public finances. I call our path to balance the "Goldilocks Approach." You have heard me say this before. It cannot happen too quickly. Nobody will believe that. It cannot take too long because anybody, apparently, except the Liberals, can do that. The path to balance must be just right. As spring arrives, we are reminded of the importance of renewal. We have an opportunity to breathe new life into public services that we hold most dear, many of which were on life support. At the centre of our healthcare system must be the patients who expect to have a seamless health care experience.

As the previous government created 14 community care access centres, then 14 local health integration networks, then 76 sub-LINH, amid all of this alphabet soup and patchwork of agencies, where were the patients? Where were the families? While they were left languishing in waiting rooms, they were being treated in hospital hallways. I know my 86-year-old mother was one of those patients who was left in the hallway to be tended to for hours, 12 hours.

They fell through the cracks of a fragmented health care system without a place to turn or a person to speak with to get help in helping them back on their feet. It is time to stop investing in the bloated bureaucracy and start investing in the people who actually care for patients.

It is time to redirect our valuable resources to help support our doctors, our nurses, and our personal support workers. Our government is committed to making every dollar go further by targeting where it is truly needed.

With an aging population, we cannot afford to remain mired in the old ways of thinking. We cannot afford to waste precious resources. All available dollars need to be directed to those who actually provide the care.

When it comes to our education system, the numbers show that the previous government failed our children when it comes to teaching the fundamentals. The current curriculum did not prepare our students for the many challenges that are before them. Our math scores have dropped every year over the past five years, despite more and more money being invested to serve fewer and fewer children.

Our government is embracing change in the education system.

Hear, hear. Our plan, Education that Works for You was developed following one of the most extensive public consultations ever undertaken in Ontario education.

It involved 72,000 contributions from parents, teachers, students, employers and organizations. Our plan includes reform such as a new math curriculum that will focus on math fundamentals for all grades; a new focus on STEM, on skilled trades and financial literacy to help prepare for careers of the future; and a modern, age-appropriate health and physical education curriculum that will keep all students safe.

These advancements respect parents, support students and focus our resources on the tools the educators need to help our children build the skills and knowledge needed for good jobs in the 21st century's global economy.

Our government is also breathing new life into social services. We are going to take 23,000 children with autism off the waitlist for services in the next 18 months.

We are going to give teachers more tools to support children with special needs in the classroom, and we are going to fix the disjointed patchwork of supports that traps people on social assistance and denies them meaningful opportunities to find jobs. That is how we protect what matters most.

Not only are we taking a hard look at our health care system, our education system, our finances and our economy, but we are also taking a hard look at government, itself, and how government does business. Our approach must put people first in everything we do. We must start holding government to a higher standard. This is not about tinkering or making a few adjustments on the edges here and there. We are moving government into the 21st century. Take customer service, as an example. In the private sector, you must compete for your customers' attention and your customers' loyalty.

You take nothing for granted and always put your customer first because, if you do not, they will take their business elsewhere. Government, for too long, has refused to embrace this kind of customer service model, because it only ever had it themselves to compete with. It is time for everyone in government to start acting like the competition is coming and start to treat people like responsible adults.

We are taking steps to revolutionize the way we deliver services. One of those services is how you buy beverage alcohol.

Our government is actively working to expand the sale of beer and wine into corner stores, box stores and even more grocery stores. We made a commitment during the campaign to provide consumers with greater choice and convenience, and we plan on delivering. We firmly believe this will not only open up the province to more choice, but it will also lead to competitive prices and all of this without the need to privatize our valuable government assets.

Consider this. Ontario has the lowest density of retail outlets selling beer, wine, cider and spirits in Canada.

[Remarks in French.] Le Québec compte plus de 8000 magasins de vente au détail de boissons alcoolisées.

Quebec has over 8,000 retail stores selling beverage alcohol, 8,000. In Newfoundland, there are 21 outlets for every 10,000 people over the age of 18 in the province.

In Ontario, any guesses? Less than 3,000. We have our work cut out for us. In order to assist us with this initiative, we have appointed Ken Hughes as a special advisor on the alcohol file. Ken is a former cabinet minister in Alberta with experience in multiple fields.

We look forward to working with him to bring more choice and convenience to Ontario's beverage alcohol consumers. As we take on this ambitious project, let us make one thing very clear. Treating people like adults and expanding the sale of beer and wine to corner stores, grocery stores and big box stores were core promises of Premier Ford, core promises that our government campaigned on.

They are promises that we all intend to deliver on. On that, we should be absolutely clear. We look forward to working with any partner who is prepared to work with us in good faith to make these promises a reality. On a somewhat less glamorous note, our government is also modernizing our approach to the exciting field of procurement. It starts with making our internal systems more efficient. We recently announced the creation of a central procurement process to dramatically change the way government makes purchases. By employing this bulk-buying power, we will be able to save as much as $1 billion a year.

Again, this may not be as exciting as the alcohol file, but I can tell you Treasury Board President Peter Bethlenfalvy and I both find saving $1 billion pretty exciting.

The modernization of government also means embracing technology to make government more digitally enabled and user-friendly. Our government is further working with our municipal partners to help modernize their governments and improve local service delivery and efficiency.

After 15 years of the previous government's fiscal mismanagement, many of Ontario's small and rural municipalities have limited capacity to plan and manage their resources and to modernize their services. To help them find smarter ways to deliver services to support their communities and respect their taxpayers, we announced last week a one-time investment of $200 million to 405 small and rural municipalities across the province. This payment puts the people of Ontario at the heart of municipal decision-making as we work with our municipal partners to build a sustainable future for our province. We will continue to take a hard look at how governments can put people first. We want to look to see how we can work smarter, how we can spend smarter, how we ensure the real-life experiences of every person in Ontario is at the centre of every single decision that our government makes. No matter what the service, regulation, program, process or policy, we are always asking ourselves how it will benefit the people. Your favourite two words are coming. In closing, our government remains focused on what is important: The need to restore accountability, sustainability and trust in government; the need to restore confidence in Ontario's finances and reduce our debt burden; the need to protect the critical public services we hold most dear, including our world-class health care and education systems; and the need to make Ontario the best place to do business, a place where jobs and prosperity reach every corner of our province.

Our government is acutely aware of the challenges we inherited from the previous government. We have made significant—some would say "unbelievable"—progress in the first nine months.

Friends, it is only the beginning. You will see how we intend to build on that progress when we deliver the first budget on April 11th.

It will be a plan that continues us down the road to fiscal sustainability while protecting what matters the most. Stay tuned. The best is yet to come.

Questions & Answers

KE: Thank you, Minister Fedeli. We have time for just a few questions. We got started a little bit later today, but I want to ask those of you with questions to fill out a couple of cards at your table. While we are waiting, I will ask one question. You went through a number of initiatives today. If you had to pick one initiative as the most impactful or important to your government of all the initiatives that you have done so far, what initiative would it be and why?

VF: Which of your children are your favourites? I think everything that we have done has been impactful, but, at the end of the day, it is for the people. For the people of Ontario, we are beginning to show them the path to balance, how we intend to restore trust and accountability in the government and how we intend to protect the core services like health, education that they enjoy here, in Ontario. I think we have shown them that we do have a path. It is about the creation of about 132,000 jobs. We have shown them all can be done.

It can be done in a collective way. We have a great caucus, a great cabinet, a great leader, a great leadership team that works together to make sure we are delivering for the people. I think that is the real message that Ontario is Open for Business, Open for Jobs and that has created the stability that gives us the resources to do what we need to do with health, education and social services. That is which child I like best.

KE: Thank you. We do have a card coming up here now.

Can you tell us how the 130,000 jobs were created in the last nine months? What initiatives do you suspect will create the most jobs in the coming years?

VF: What we really see is a restored and a renewed confidence in the business community. Wherever Premier

Ford goes, wherever our caucus and our cabinet go, we hear the same thing: "Bring it on." When I was in New York, just after the Fall Economic Statement, I sat in a room not unlike this, not quite as big, quite as large, and the message was they were not talking about me; they were talking about the words. They said, "My gosh, we have not heard words like that coming out of your government in 15 years." It gives them the confidence to reinvest in business. Whether it is the WSIB that has been reduced by $1.5 billion for the businesses of Ontario, the carbon tax that put $880 million back in the pockets of the business, cancelling the federal government's passive income tax for Ontario saved 7,900 business members up to $40,000.

I am a lifelong entrepreneur. The second you have a dime in your pocket, you put it back into your business. It is that reinvestment into businesses that has helped them with the confidence to hire the 132,000 people that they hired.

KE: Thank you very much, Minister. I think we have run out of time today. I do want to invite Pat Dalzell, from Bruce Power, to come up and give the thank you.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Pat Dalzell, Director of Government and Stakeholder Relations - Corporate Affairs, Bruce Power

Thanks, Kent. On behalf of Bruce Power, the Empire Club and all the other sponsors, it is my pleasure to thank Minister Fedeli for joining us today.

We are always proud to sponsor events like these where we can exchange information and ideas. Minister, your government's efforts to promote trust, transparency and accountability in the province's finances are very much appreciated by the business community and the people of Ontario. At Bruce Power, we say that we like to power more for less. That is clearly a shared value of your government. Bruce Power and the rest of the business community look forward to continuing to work with the government to deliver on your vision of growth, prosperity and a bright future for generations to come.

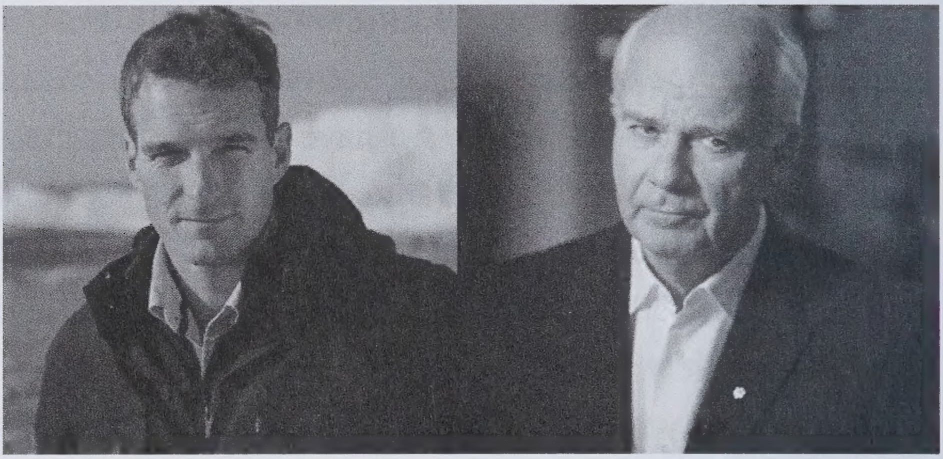
Thank you for your service, commitment and dedication in continuing to make Ontario a prosperous province. A special thanks to the Empire Club and all the staff for putting together this great event today and this huge crowd today. Thank you all for joining us. A final round of applause for Minister Fedeli.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming today. Coming up in the next weeks, we have Phil Verster, President of Metrolinx on May 2nd, and also Dan Snow and Peter Mansbridge on April 23rd. It is a talk around history. There have been a lot of events you guys have come to, and I want to sincerely thank you for coming today.

For those of you who want to use the backdrop to take some photos, I am going to ask the sound guys to take away the podium.

Meeting adjourned. Thank you very much.



DAN SNOW AND PETER MANSBRIDGE

ON: HISTORY IN THE MODERN WORLD: WHAT CANADIANS CAN LEARN ABOUT THE FUTURE FROM OUR PAST

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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April 23, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting. Today we present Dan Snow and Peter Mansbridge for today's topic, "History in the Modern World."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

Mr. Peter Mansbridge, Journalist, TV News Anchor, and Former Chief Correspondent for CBC News

Mr. Dan Snow, Popular Historian and Broadcaster; Ambassador, English Heritage; Founder, History Hit TV

Guests:

Ms. Vivien Clubb, Head, Marketing and Communications, IBK Capital Corp.

Ms. Kelly Jackson, Associate Vice President, Government Relations and Strategic Communications, Humber College; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Nona Macdonald Heaslip, Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Kate Mavor, Chief Executive Officer, English Heritage

Mr. Kevin McGurgan, British Consul General in Toronto and Director-General for the UK's Department for International Trade in Canada

Dr. Gordon McIvor, Past President, Empire Club of Canada

A quote from a 1998 speech "Who Killed Canadian History?" to the Empire Club by the then Director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum was: "Without a sense of our past, we are like poor souls wandering lost in the forest without a map. Without a sense of our history, we can have no future. Without a firm grasp of whom and where we are, we cannot hope to successfully integrate the newcomers who come to Canada to build a new and a good life in this most favourite of nations. Without history, our children will know nothing of what made Parliament, our laws, our society the way they are.

Without history and the techniques that study teaches us, the ability to read, write, reason can never be well taught.

Without history, our sons and daughters will never know what their fathers and grandfathers did to help save the world." I think that it is incredibly well said. The Empire Club of Canada has always been a believer in the importance of documenting our past. That is why the speech I just quoted you and all speeches from the past, 114 seasons, have been preserved and bound in what we call The Red Book. Since 1903, The Red Book has been used by university students in understanding Canadian history. It has been a part of the tapestry of our history.

Thanks to all of you guys, all the audience members today for sharing this experience with us. Our collective history about the country we live in determines, in many ways, our view of the world and how we make decisions. The old adage that "Those that do not understand history are condemned to repeat it" is well accepted as being an obvious truth. In people's understanding of their personal history and that of the country is so often strongly influenced by political, and in many places, the religious ideology of that point in time. What makes Canada, Canada?

What makes all of us Canadian? It is our shared experience and our shared understanding of that experience. That is why today the Empire Club will present one of the world's most renowned historians, in conversation with one of the most successful broadcasters and communicators of past decades. Together, they will dive into how Canadians can better understand their future by having a good grasp on events and leaders who got us to where we are today.

I am going to start with Dan Snow. Today's guest is the host of one the world's most-listened-to history podcasts, and founder of a new history channel, historyhit.tv. He regularly works with the BBC and The One Show.

Born and raised in London, England, he remembers spending every weekend of his childhood being taken to castles, battlefields, country houses and churches alongside visiting Canadian historic landmarks. Half Canadian, half English, Dan developed a great love of history while studying at Oxford and immediately started presenting military history programmes with his father, Peter Snow, the notable BBC Broadcaster.

He has written or contributed to several books including On This Day in History, Death or Victory which is the story of the siege of Quebec in 1759. He wrote also The World's Greatest Twentieth Century Battlefields and most recently The Battle of Waterloo Experience. Dan is a proud ambassador and champion for English Heritage, a UK based charity that uniquely cares and looks after over 400+ historic sites across England and tells the story of England and its world history. The Empire Club is proud to welcome historian, broadcaster, television presenter, and ambassador for English Heritage. Ladies and gentlemen, please, put your hands together for Dan Snow. At the Empire Club of Canada, we have often used the turn of phrase "the speaker needs no introduction." This could not apply more to anyone than today's moderator, who is a household name in Canada. He is a widely respected journalist and has been the face of

CBC News for nearly 30 years. Nonetheless, I am incredibly honoured to make this introduction. I take pleasure in this because I grew up watching our guest on his nightly spot, along with the rest of you, as the chief correspondent and lead anchor of CBC's The National. He had this role from 1988 to 2017, winning 12 Gemini Awards for broadcast excellence, including the Gordon Sinclair Award for the Best Overall Broadcast Journalist in 1990 and 1998.

His other honours include two Canadian Screen Awards, numerous honorary degrees and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Radio Television Digital News Association.

He has also been inducted into the Canadian News Hall of Fame and is an Officer of the Order of Canada. He is deeply passionate about the importance of history and national history. To underscore this, I have found a passage in his 2002 Empire Club speech entitled "Canada in the Future." He said about this country, "We were meant to have courage, and determination and spirit. We were meant to teach our children that life is good. And we were meant to teach them that they can make it better. Robertson Davies once said that Canada is not a country you love. It is a country you worry about. He was right. I certainly worry about it. I worry that we may become a timid people. I worry that so many of us are unaware of the greatness of our past that we may become doomed to believe that we cannot be great in the future. And I know how sad that would be." Peter is drawn to broadcast the most historic events.

He set his retirement broadcast to the coverage of Canada's 150th celebration. He has most recently worked with today's feature speaker, Dan Snow, on a number of things, including December's CBC program called Royal Wedding for the Ages.

For his third appearance at the Empire Club of Canada, please, welcome renowned television news anchor, journalist, columnist, Peter Mansbridge.

Mr. Dan Snow with Mr. Peter Mansbridge

PM: Thank you, everybody. That was just the way I wrote it for you, Kent. Let me say a couple of things, first of all, about our real guest here today, Dan, who has brought to life history in ways that I do not think any historian has. He has brought in a whole new audience of young people by his dynamic presentation and, of course, he is young. He is also really tall. I did not agree to do this unless we were sitting. It is an interesting mix because you have got the British historian who has deep connections to Canada. Many of you would know his mom, Ann MacMillan and his aunt Margaret MacMillan.

We would like to say he is Canadian really, even though he was born in Britain. On the other hand, you have got me who was born in Britain and 65 years ago, today, I got off the boat in Quebec City as we came to Canada. I did not realize that until my sister wrote me this morning or sent me an email this morning and told me this is the anniversary.

DS: Carried off the boat. Babe in arms, right?

PM: I wish.

DS: Little, tiny newborn.

PM: A newborn, yes, I was just struggling in my sixth year at that point. Nevertheless, it was a great opportunity for our family, and we, obviously, never regretted the move. For Dan, he has the best of both worlds.

He gets here pretty frequently to visit relatives and to talk history. I am going to throw back a quote of his right away: "History is the most exciting thing that has ever happened to anyone on this planet." That is before the Leafs game tonight, right? Tell me about why it is the most exciting thing that has ever happened to anyone on this planet.

DS: It is funny that lots of people pick out that quote to suggest that I am insane, but it seems to me self-evident. History is everything that has ever happened to anyone who has ever lived, who breathed, who has ever walked this planet. Therefore, whether or not it is Alexander the Great, leading the cavalry charge of the Battle of Gaugamela, pushing off to the right wing, swinging around and taking Darius out at the end of that battle, or whether it is the Leafs winning, now, ancient history, the last Stanley Cup, or whether it is your parents' eyes meeting across the dance floor in that nightclub for the first time. That is what history is for me. I think sometimes we are not good enough at defining history. I think we can say that history—we hive off all the other bits, culture and film studies, engineering and medicine, and what is left is a kind of slightly dry, legal history, if you like, of constitutional development and kings and queens. I think we need to just be confident and firm about dragging back all that other stuff and talking about the—because human beings, we are an astonishingly eccentric species.

The stuff we got up to when you realize, when you set your boundaries from ancient Sumeria right up to Donald Trump's America is completely remarkable.

PM: That is quite a spin. It does not seem to be heading in the right direction. Kent mentioned in his remarks that saying that we have all grown up with that unless you understand your history, unless you know your history, you run the risk of repeating the mistakes that history teaches you. I like that quote for this reason.

I remember doing my first broadcast from Afghanistan, when the Canadian troops were there. It was 2003 or 2004. We were doing it live back here.

My first guest was Rick Hillier, the Canadian general who was, at that point, the Commander of all coalition forces in Afghanistan. I looked at him, and I said, "When you look around this country and you see the kind of carcasses on the ground of past armies who have tried to invade Afghanistan, and it has not worked out very well in most of those cases, and now you are coming in here, a big coalition force, I am sure you have read history"—because that is the kind of guy General Hillier is—"why do you think that you could not repeat the same mistakes that happened in the past?" He said, "We know our history and that will never happen. We know how we are going to deal with this." Here we are almost 20 years later. The Afghan war is not over, and they are sitting down negotiating with the Taliban, the people who they went in there to defeat about trying to come up with a peace agreement.

You could argue whether that phrase works in that case or not, but, generally, how do you feel about, given what you know about history, what do you feel about that phrase that we use, that if you do not know your history, you run the risk of repeating it?

DS: I think it is one of the most well-known phrases.

I think there is a lot of truth in it. Again, coming back to my early point, which is the scientific principle is all about history. You learn; you do an experiment; it does not work out; you build. In large, failure is a key part of development in engineering and science or medicine. The first thing when you go to the doctor's, the first thing that happens is you talk about your history. You talk about what the events that have led you to the place you are at at the moment. Yes, clearly, I find that for any study of state craft, history is vital.

If you are going to sort out—I mean, look at the world at the moment, if you are going to try and go to Israel, Palestine, Northern Island, Sudan, Mali, Timbuktu in Mali. Any way, any solution, any way of coping with these problems in these countries does not just start with—you first have to work out where that history has come from.

The composition—what is Mali and where did it come from? The unique geography of Mali, bolted together by the French, a Tuareg, large Islamic northern half of that country with Timbuktu in it, and then a Bantu African largely Christian or animist south—these two bits put together for imperial convenience by the French. Any discussion around Mali, that blighted country, which I happened to visit the other day, needs to start with history. Any discussion. Trump and the government—we must not endlessly talk about your southern neighbour. It is so difficult not to, because he looms so large.

PM: He is your friend. You just invited him for another state dinner.

DS: Right, he is coming to the palace. He is coming to the palace that is right. I would like to say it is unusual to invite, but the poor, old Queen has had a lot of dodgy folk at the palace over the years. What is interesting about him is he does not seem like he is aware of the complexities of the Golan Heights, for example, or the complexity of what is going on in Israel-Palestine or, indeed, in Korea. That is why I think he is ultimately frustrated, and Mike Pompeo is ultimately frustrated in their attempts to fix problems in the world, because they do not have a strong enough grasp of the underlying—of what is causing those problems. Of course, we have got Brexit close to home. I do not want to be a smug Brit who is always laughing at North Americans. We are leading the field at the moment when it comes to ahistorical mistakes. I think we are going to talk about Brexit in a bit. I will not jump the gun there.

PM: No, we had better spend a few minutes on Brexit. Before we get there, there is another one of your quotes. You wrote a piece in the Telegraph in 2017 where you said, "Canada and Britain share a past. We are fellow travellers in the uncertain world of the present."

What were you thinking when you came up with that?

DS: Until 150 years ago, the place that we are sitting in now was known as British North America.

It is fascinating that Britain, just after the fall of Quebec in 1759 and the end of that war in 1761, there was this brief remarkable period of North American history where Britain basically controlled the entire continent west of the Mississippi from Florida up to Hudson's Bay. That did not last long because those ungrateful Americans, patriots, upset the apple cart there, but, anyway. The bits that were left, there was the United States of America and then there was British North America, the bits. That is why, by the way, when people in the UK, as they often do, go, "Well, this is the great thing about Britain, standing alone in 1940 against German Wehrmacht Luftwaffe," I just get—I am sorry, but I just have a quick point to make there. The second largest country on planet earth was firmly alongside Britain. This giant economic, demographic, agricultural, industrial powerhouse, the largest chunk of North America, in fact, and people say it was not truly a World War until—and hold on—the largest bit of North America was involved in the Second World War from September 1939. I think the Atlantic is—just as the channel, the English Channel has been—an air gap for many people in the UK, seeing Europe ending in one place and Britain and starting, even though we are a 20-mile gap between Calais and

Dover. I think the Atlantic Ocean has acted as a kind of air gap for British understanding and sort of remembering Canada. Nineteenth century stories talk about Canada being Britain's Wild West. The Americans had their western expansion, Britain also had its western expansion, but there was the Atlantic Ocean in the middle, and it was Atlantic Ocean dominated by British ships and increasingly, telegraph cables and things. Politicians, in the early 20th century, when there was this thought about how the world was full of empires and some were transitioned to nation states, and British politicians complained endlessly about why the Americans were allowed to conquer a whole bunch of territory and called it America, the Russians conquered a bunch of territory and called it Russia; and Britain's own expansion was going along through British North America into Canada out west, but because there was an ocean in the middle, it certainly looked completely illegitimate. They called it the "tyranny of saltwater."

They said the only difference is we have to get on the boat at Bristol, and we get off in Halifax. Apart from that, show me the difference. The Russians are dispossessing the Chinese. We are moving native people from land east of the Urals. The Americans are on this giant imperial project in the south and west of that continent and into the Pacific. So, how come Britain is the bad guy? What is going on around here?

Britain was unable to make that transition into—a lot of people were suggesting, "Would it not be great, Britain, that the commonwealth could have an imperial parliament?" I think, in the end, the geography kind of undid it. Also, you see Britain, the great British invention, its gift to the world, the railway, kind of undid Britain in the end, because the railway forged an empire in America, in Germany, in Russia, in India, and in Canada, and it meant, because you could not get on a train and hop somewhere, it suddenly, it just had the effect on the kind of building of nation states.

It kind of went differently. I think that the Canadian story is, of course, partly, is the stories of Indigenous peoples, of course, as well. But it is partly the story of the British. If you look at the people we are talking about—we are sitting in this building, which is named after one of George III's slightly errant sons as was this city, Fort York.

I was looking on the map today. You have got Simcoe born in Britain; you have got Macdonald, whom I was considering in terms of the western expansion, which is apparently now controversial, certainly on the west coast, as some statues are being pulled down. These are British-born people. The Canadians and British were—and then we have got the First World War and the Second World War.

We have got 100 years ago, last year: The Canadians played a disproportionately large role in the defeat of Germany on the Western Front.

By 1917 and 1918 and the Battle of Amiens, the Canadian Corps advanced the furthest any Allied unit had advanced in the whole of the First World War on the Western Front. That is a fact I enjoy telling Brits as often as possible.

PM: What do they say when you tell them?

DS: Well, they just go huh. We have taken different tracks, because Canada has become a hugely self-confident, independent, proud country with its own national story, and has drifted apart, of course, from Britain. It is no longer economically, politically, socially or culturally dependent on Britain. Even when I was a kid, I understand that British soap operas, British TV shows were like top-rating Canadian shows. And, today, British people are surprised to hear the Queen is still on Canadian bank notes and stuff, as our paths have diverged, of course. The links are so powerful. I am here on behalf of the English Heritage for this trip. On English Heritage, you go through these English Heritage properties, these medieval castles. Regarding the Magna Carta, the thinking that was going on, the decisions that were being made in these great castles, these parliament buildings, affected all of our ancestors, whether or not they were among those who took the boat west or were staying in the home country. That was the cultural, intellectual and political milieu and linguistic milieu. We are speaking English in this room, named after the errant son of George III.

So much of this story of us meeting today goes back beyond Confederation to a time when Britain and Canada were almost as one.

PM: The relationship has changed over time. There has always been that connection, but it started off with sort of England as the parent, us as the child. Then, it became sort of England as the older sibling of the two.

DS: I think I know where this is going.

PM: You guys are in one hell of a mess over there.

DS: That is right. It is a bit like The Godfather, where there is the younger sibling, and then here is Fredo, who is the useless older, so we are Fredo, and you guys are—

PM: How would you describe the role? I find it interesting when you talk about trying to explain our role in the First World War. Wait until they find out that we were at D-Day.

DS: Not just at D-Day. There is English Heritage properties across Southern England where the Canadian troops trained for D-Day and garrisoned these wonderful castles and things, but, no, the Canadians played an enormous role in D-Day. They played an enormous role, as you know, in liberating Holland, in particular, and Canadians are still welcome there as liberators.

PM: How would you describe the relationship now? Where are we on that scale of how the relationship has developed over time?

DS: You have outgrown your creators. It is the old Frankenstein "I am going somewhere where they are and stuff, but I am not really going to get there."

You are now this hugely powerful, huge, well, one of the world's greatest soft powers, cultural, intellectual powers with a hugely dynamic economy that is not in any way dependent on Britain. You do not need us for anything anymore. You used to need us as sort of immigrants, maybe, or migrants. That is no longer true. It is a story, now, as you say, of siblings. It is like there is my uncle in the audience there. When I was growing up, my uncle Tom was a god, to me. Now, I have grown up, and he is still a god to me, but we can have a beer, and we are going to watch hockey, and we are buddies now. We give each other relationship advice or whatever it is.

I think that is kind of the story. Particularly, as Britain lost its global empire, then like with Australia, like with Canada, you guys started paying more attention to the neighbourhood because Britain was unable to offer to you. Australia, halfway through the Second World War went, "Britain, it has been great; our security against Japanese now depends on the U.S. Pacific Fleet, sorry," and Britain said, "Yes, I am afraid so; we cannot afford to have a massive fleet in the Pacific and a massive fleet in Europe—just cannot do it—and in the Mediterranean." The same kind of thing happened with Canada.

If we are having interesting discussions about the Pacific area, the Arctic, Britain does not really have a huge role to play. Ironically, it is us going to come knocking on the door now for trade deals and things, because we are severing our links with Europe, apparently, if that happens. I think the relationship will be completely reversed. We are going to come to you as supplicants.

PM: The Consul General is sitting here, right?

DS: Oh, yes, sorry.

PM: Let us deal with the elephant in the room, being Brexit.

DS: That is harsh on the Consul General.

PM: The Brexit issue I find fascinating for a number of reasons. In a way, it is the flipside of what we went through almost 30 years ago with the free trade negotiations where there was a fear on the part of a good number of Canadians that we were giving up our sovereignty by working into a deal with the Americans.

In the election that followed, I think it was about 60/40. Bill Graham would remember, in terms of, he lost, but he made a remarkable comeback a few years later, but the issue was those who were against free trade outnumbered those who were for it. But because of our first-past-the-post-system, the Conservatives won and free trade went into effect, and it has been there ever since. Here, you have the situation that you were protecting your sovereignty, at least that is what the leave people would say, right. Where is this now?

Because I have got to tell you, for most of us, we just think, Wake me when it is over, because there have been so many false starts on an ending to this.

DS: This is one lesson from history. I think is very interesting. It is very unusual for people to voluntarily pull their sovereignty upwards, right. It is much more attractive—like we all do, and I do especially as I enter middle age—to dream about an island with just me on it, sitting around, no one telling me what to do. That is why Canada is so wonderful, because you have got a Georgian Bay, and you can live that dream. You rarely hear people going, "You know what I want to do?

I want to pull my sovereignty to achieve outcomes together, but I recognize that I will maybe be outvoted and have to do things I do not particularly want to do, but I am bearing in mind it is for a greater good."

That is a harder philosophical principle. The USA managed to bind those colonies together, but then fought the bloodiest war in their history in the 1860s to try and keep that dream alive. In Scotland, we recently had a referendum that was remarkably close, unbelievably. And in Britain, which is thought around the world to be a pretty unified nation state, the northern half of our island, 45% of people voted to leave the UK project. In Canada, you guys had two referenda in the '90s. The second one was like the most complicated question in the history of the world, and it was what, 0.1? It was crazy the percentage in Quebec—the majority for remaining in Canada. And Spain, Italy—there were huge pressures on modern nation states, because it is a very beguiling thing, which is, "Guys, let us get rid of those southern Italians, and we will be rich." I remember being in Alberta in the '90s and with the oil sands. Everybody was like, "You know what? Hang on. What about Quebec? What about Alberta's independence? Now, we are talking." It is an attractive concept both individually to assert individual sovereignty: "I am going to take back control. I want to make myself great again. I am going to get rid of all these other people." We are experiencing a spasm of that in Britain at the moment, both internally because of Ireland and Scotland, but also with our relationship with the EU. It is attractive. People are saying we are outvoted; we are doing things, and we are not able to have as much control over these outcomes as we would like. That is a reason, in my opinion, that point of view underestimates the nature of the interconnected globalized worlds. It also underestimates the nature of Britain as a European country in the last 2,000 years. Britain, for much of the last 2,000 years, has been part of a trans-channel empire. We do not like to think about it because of Britain's kind of snapshot of itself is the hot summer of 1940: "Winston Churchill, White Cliffs of Dover, RAF—everything is fine.

No Canadians, certainly no Poles. We do not like to think about the Polish airmen." But there is a snapshot. Or in the 1890s when Britain had the largest fleet in the world, the largest empire the world had ever seen, and it could just say, "You know what, Europe?

You do whatever you like. We are fine over here." Those were actually abnormal moments in British history. Normal in British history is we are like insanely integrated. Our entire British economy was basically built on supplying the low countries with wool through the medieval period. Our whole economy in the 19th century was importing stuff from the rest of the world and then pushing it into Europe, into Danube and the Rhine. Our trade with Europe was much more than our trade with our empire. It is difficult for British people sometimes, to—and history is a huge part of that. We see ourselves as this fiercely proud, independent, once mighty nation, and we do not understand why we have to walk into a room in Brussels with 25 other finance ministers and hammer out a compromise, which brackets, ironically, that we are usually on the winning side of. We have pretty good outcomes in Brussels for us, but it was sold to the British people that we were being outvoted; we were being railroaded, and it is an attractive argument to say let us put up a barrier. Of course, there was the question of race as well. The Russians—we now know through disinformation and the nationalists on the other side—during the leave campaign were putting up huge, big posters of predominantly non-white people coming over from the Middle East, refugees from ISIS or North Africa and scaring people into thinking we were about to be submerged under a wave of non-white immigration. There are all sorts of things going on there.

PM: I am going to ask for questions from the audience in a minute, but there are just two other areas I want to go to. Just the last point on Brexit, because it is often at times this in a country where there is a crisis surrounding an issue that you tend to define yourselves.

I know that Canada went through this both on free trade and on the various constitutional crises of the

1980s and 1990s, that at least at the end of it you had a better sense of kind of who you were as Canadians.

Is there any sort of revaluation or defining of what a Brit is today?

DS: That is interesting. During the Scottish Referendum campaign—this is the same in Quebec—the number of people in Scotland identified as British actually crept up slightly. We do not know where this crisis is going to end, but, certainly, it is funny, because it has turned, most people—like I did not really think about the EU that much, to be honest, five years ago.

Now, my kids are in EU t-shirts. We are marching through the streets. I am like, "The EU—I do not even know how it works." I am not even sure about the statutory function of the EU. I think there will be a process.

If the leavers win and we do see tighter immigration, it will be harder for international students to come, harder for people to get Visas and start businesses. I have got a wonderful nephew here today.

His brother came and studied business school in Spain and met lots of other really bright kids, and it was the obvious decision. They want to start a tech business. They want to come to London, because that is the thing to do. After Brexit, if we lose, the fear that

London will lose that lustre—we will not be attracting brilliant young, European minds to come and start their businesses in London. I think it is a battle at the moment between a vision of Britain that is older; it is whiter. This is probably sounding a bit similar to some of our southern neighbours here, but it is a vision that is older; it is whiter; it is more culturally homogenous, ethically homogenous, and a vision of Britain that is embracing the changes of the world, embracing new industries, new ways of doing things, and new people, new migrants as well.

PM: This is kind of wide open, but I want you to try and reduce the answer, too.

DS: Sorry.

PM: Is history written by fact, or is history written by experience? History is rarely written at the moment, right?

DS: "Written"—you mean we are not writing it anymore?

PM: No, but in the moment.

DS: Oh, in the moment. Yes, sorry, of course.

PM: The further you get away from the moment, is it less about fact and more about experience?

DS: Lots of historians, I think, like in the 19th century, wrote histories of Britain that involved the end point. The story was this great, magnificent empire.

Lots of people write history for themselves in the present, I think, do not they? I think the best history should be based on trying to ascertain what happened. You go way back to ancient Greece. You have got Thucydides; you have got Herodotus. They wrote down these stories. They wrote down historia, from the Greek root word 'wisdom', and they just wanted to preserve the knowledge of the things that have happened to actually often save future generations the trouble of going through them themselves. Listen, we had a massive war; it was not great; it did not turn out that well. You guys might be interested in this because you can live the experience through my writing rather than going through all the trouble of having a gigantic internecine war in the Greek world and learning it for yourself. I think that preserving those facts—preserving that kind of 'data' is the modern word—is pretty important. That is why there is a way to end it. It is very funny, because in Britain, we had this big problem in the 1990s. Everyone complained all the time. All kids were learning at school was about the rise of the far right, or the rise of the extremes, Bolshevism and nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s Europe.

Everyone thought, "This is ridiculous. All kids are learning about is the rise of these fascists." Now, everyone is thinking, "Okay, that was a good thing to teach. I am glad we taught that."

PM: While the first person gets their question ready, there are microphones in the room, so raise your hand if you are going to have a question.

DS: Straight out of it. Look at that. Keen.

PM: Just before we get to him, let me give a plug to Dan when I talk about the new wave of historians, because Dan relies a lot on digitization, his podcasts. His video work, is available online, has a great following.

One of the things you do differently than others, aside from bringing your own kind of magic and presentation to it, is that you go to the location on a lot of this stuff. You are not sitting in some studio in London. One was just a couple of weeks ago. I watched you in Culloden doing your little gimmick with Twitter live or Facebook live—the one you taught me last year. That is great. It clearly is, well, we are living in that future already, but how do you see that as a tool in the teaching of history going forward?

DS: It is so exciting, isn't it? It is so wonderful. When Notre Dame was burning last week, I got on the phone—that is a bad introduction. It was not a 'wonderful' thing, but it is an exciting time, in a way, because as Notre Dame was burning, the mainstream, the news channels were interviewing tourists who were—I do not know if you guys were watching—were asked what they could see. Well, "I have actually gone home, because it is getting late." I got Britain's best medieval architectural historian on the phone, and I did a podcast with him. He told me all about Notre Dame, why it is an astonishing building, why it matters, why it is that sort of ancestor to all of subsequent gothic cathedrals, and then we put that out. By evening, 100,000 people listened to it—25 minutes. If someone told me, when I was a student like you guys that I would be lucky enough to do that 15, 20 years later, I would have cried.

I would have wept with happiness. What an amazing privilege it is to do that. The podcast is great. I am trying to build subscribers up for an actual TV channel like Netflix where you actually bring a community of people that want to pay a little bit, and then you can make high-quality films, so I think the Internet is great, because it is allowing this. We all know this, but you guys, whether it is the Leafs or the Blue Jays or whatever, you can now go into so much more detail than we could get 20 years ago because you find these communities of insane fans. I am just looking for my community of insane history fans. That has been so rewarding to do that and to make high-quality pieces, and that it is also global—the global reach is fantastic. You had this, remember there were people from New Zealand, it was so exciting.

PM: It is remarkable. Let us take a couple of questions from the floor.

Q: Hello. I am from York University. My only question is that with the rise of Donald Trump and with Brexit at hand, how can we teach young people or people who vote about the importance of history and to not repeat the same mistakes again?

You kept saying that the reason that Brexit happened was because people wanted to take their country back. Same with Donald Trump.

How do we teach them that their country was never theirs because immigrants came and America was predominantly made of immigrants and so was Britain in the 1960s as the doors opened for other non-white or immigrants like myself? How do we teach people that vote or people whose voices are heard on the national stage about the importance of history and history from other perspectives?

As you said, people who conquered wars, who won wars, told a different version of history than compared to those that did not.

DS: That is a great, fundamental question of our time, which is how do we stop? There was a generation above us who knew that fighting gigantic trade wars, demonizing minorities and invading people was going to end badly, because they had experienced that themselves. There is the great dream of historians that you are able to—like I said about Thucydides—explain to young people, that, hey, if you do all these things, bad, then, expect such and such to happen. Give them a sense that that is why people write. My sister is making this wonderful documentary about the holocaust at the moment, because these stories—it is not good enough that when that generation dies, we just forget about the Holocaust. The whole point of history is that we go to people who, hopefully, will never even experience anything like that, but we are able to say to them these are the dark places that humanity can go to if conditions are right or wrong. We all need to be aware of that. That is why what is so depressing is the language of new nationalists, of a Steve Barron generation, actually where Trump or the people of Europe demonize minorities. They go, "Well that is the beginning of something very dangerous." If we have learned one lesson from the 20th century, it is when the alarm bells need to go off. Let us not wait until we are area-bombing German cities. Let us take action at the earliest stages of this, so when our political dialogue starts to get toxic, when our news media fail, when we get fake news, we get penetration of it. The answer is how do we do that? I do not know, but we have all just got to do what we can. That involves going to people where they are. For young people, it is about being on the social media apps; it is about being on those platforms. It is about producing short-form content.

There is a wonderful sharing of short form content that is good. Building trust in good sources of news and trying to sort of pioneer ways of kind of instant fact checking are important. There is some interesting stuff going on with technology at the moment. You can watch a clip of Donald Trump saying something, and instant fact-checking is appearing as they are doing so. It is for your generation to pull everyone else out of ignorance, because we are in a place at the moment; this epidemic of fake news is a big problem, sharing fake news.

PM: Yes, trust is the big issue of the moment for both viewers, readers and listeners, and for journalists. You have got to believe what you are reading. Part of believing what you are reading is doing your own vetting of what you are reading. I was talking to a group of students at U of T a couple of weeks ago, and there were 100 of them in the room, roughly, post-grad students, so smart, young people, and I asked them what their primary source of news was.

Without question, they are so far gone from TV and radio and newspapers; it is all about what is on their phone. Then, the next question is key: What are you reading on your phone? Do you know what you are reading on your phone? Are you going to a trusted source of information, or are you just sort of flipping through what you are getting on Facebook without any knowledge of where it came from? That is the great danger in informing and educating the people, and it is the great danger for journalism. They can get sideswiped through this and, to some degree, elements of journalism have been pushed aside. I always describe the kind of news-making scene as a three-parter. There is that journalists have got to promise you that they are going to dig for the information. They are going to go as far as they can in finding the information. There are your public officials, whether they be elected or unelected, in business or wherever, and they have got to promise to you that they are willing to provide information. The key is no matter what those two do, if the public does not care, if they do not want information or if they do not go to the trouble of ensuring what information they are reading is real, then we have got a big problem. I think you are focusing in on a very important element of how future historians will look at this period.

Q: **Hi, MJ Perry. I have lived through a lot of history. I was wondering: I spend a lot of time in archives, and I am concerned with our world, which is focused on return on investment and branding.**

I go into archives, and I work with documents that, literally, are falling apart in my hands, that there seems to be difficulty in translating the importance of historic preservation. There should be the

ability for people to go to those original documents, original sites, all of that and get it out there and help people to understand history is an important part of who we are, and this area deserves as much funding as any STEM course, or it deserves a name on a building as much as any law library or any of those other things. It is just that at least here—I do not know about the UK—I will be honest, there seems to be something, along with the many humanities and liberal arts disciplines that is just sort of ignored.

DS: Well, you are not going to find us disagreeing with that. I think there is an interesting thing in the UK.

We have got a fake news epidemic, which a big problem; we have got fake news. We also have got a problem with young people feeling excluded from politics, young people from different backgrounds feeling this way, so we need to teach, civics or fake news education. Imagine if there was already a subject that you could study on those ancient subjects on the whole history of the world. The whole point of that subject was to use your critical faculties to work out whether something had happened or not or what was true and, in doing so, you would tune out lies and propaganda and try and get to the real sense of what happened. Imagine if that was already taught widely in schools.

It is. We have got history. History is made for this time, and it is a vital tool. Study history; you will be no one's fool.

PM: Are there any others? We are sort of over time here. Short questions and short answers.

DS: I would like to leave tonight.

Q: Question on leadership. Are we really in a bad spot for leaders in the world, today, and was it better in Churchill's time? I seem to think we do not have very good leadership around the world.

DS: That is a very interesting question. I remember when Anthony Eden was Prime Minister of Britain was full of amphetamines. Hitler was not a great leader, but, in our past, it is kind of an unfashionable thing to say, "Actually, you know what, the world is not that bad at the moment." We have got a major problem around climate change.

We have got problems elsewhere, but, actually, we are pretty lucky to be alive. In fact, we are incredibly lucky to be alive today. We have got a robot on Mars responding to controls on an iPad down on earth. We are doing pretty well. We can take a—you can drink, not you, sir, you can drink too much—take a liver out and put another one in England, for free; there is a little bit of a waiting list, but that is a pretty extraordinary society we are living in.

The answer is I think there are pressures on model leadership around privacy; your life gets destroyed; your financial rewards are not very good, because Herbert Asquith, Prime Minister of Britain, again, during the peak of Britain—like an American press baron bought him a house, which he lived in. Very nice, right? Now, I think maybe some of the best people are not going into leadership positions anymore, but I do also think, though, we are also tapping into a vast reservoir of people that are leaders and that is women.

Actually, some of those positive stories around leadership in the world, at the moment, are coming from women who would have been excluded from these positions not even 20 years ago, let alone 100 and 200 years ago. I share your worry, I do. Obviously, you look at the world and think, "How, in 2019, are we living in a world dominated by Trump, Putin, the new Emperor in China and Erdogan in Turkey?" This is not—it feels bad, does not it? I agree. Yet, leaders have always been, I mean, personally, I think there is a wonderful quote from the American Civil Rights Movement, which is, "Strong people do not need a strong leader." I think there is a big question mark about now: Why do we have these leaders?

We do not really want a nuclear presidential monarchy in the U.S. Actually, I think we want leadership, but we do not need this kind of strange, strong man, medieval tradition. We have still got a little bit of people, and, in Britain at the moment, all the polls say Britain really wants a strong leader.

I am like I am not sure we do want a strong leader. I think we just want a bunch of experts working out what we need to do. An interesting question.

PM: I am basically in alignment with that answer, with one exception.

I think that we, generally in the media, are responsible for the fact that not as many people choose to enter public life, because of the kind of scrutiny that Dan was talking about that they have to go through. It is not worth it. I do not have a perfect past. I may have done something wrong in school. Do I really want this all dragged out through an election campaign? I have nothing but time for people, like Bill Graham and the others in this room who have served in public office, who have run for office. In many ways, when I look at it, it is a thankless job. You run for, first of all, the nomination of your party, and you have got to go into rooms like this in front of party faithful, your friends and relatives, and you have got to basically declare everything you have ever done and be prepared to answer questions about things you have done and what you stand for. Most of the people who are running for that nomination lose. They are gone. They are done already. If you win, you get to go to the next level, and go through it all over again with another four or five candidates, a much tougher crowd, and more insistent questions. You get through that; you win.

There. What have you got? You have got that likely you are leaving your home, leaving your family behind you while you go to the capital city to serve in office. You have probably given up a job that is probably paying a lot more. You had great ideas when you were running for office. You suddenly find that you are just one in a caucus who will decide what you are actually really going to do and stand for, and you have got people like me running down the hall chasing you, asking you questions you cannot even answer. That is if you win. I have covered politics in this country since 1968.

I saw some bad apples in that time. The overwhelming majority are good, decent, honest people who are just trying to make life better for us, based on what they think is right, but that is why they entered.

They did not enter to get a bunch of money in an envelope. They did it because they believed it was the right thing to do.

DS: It is odd to me, and it feels jarring that we live in a world now where to go into childcare, you have to do qualifications now. Nursing, compared to our grandfathers' time—nursing is an astonishingly difficult career to get into with qualifications.

Yet, our politicians still might as well be drawn from the Athenian Pnyx. I do not know where that, maybe that is necessary, because they should just be normal people or whether we do start to go, look, it is kind of unacceptable that you have never read the U.S. Constitution and you are—in Britain, we had a guy in charge of delivering Brexit. And the big sticking point of Brexit, one of the many sticking points of Brexit, is we have a situation in Ireland where the EU has provided a situation where two sovereign bodies, Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, can have frictionless trade and travel between them, because we have regulatory alignment on either side. It is called the Good Friday Agreement. The guy trying to negotiate with Europe had admitted that he never read the Good Friday Agreement. You all work in offices and business where you would just be fired for—that is a gross dereliction. It feels odd, to me, that we have professionalized everything so remarkably, yet our politics is spectacularly amateurish. I am sure we can all think of some fairly amateur politicians not far from here.

PM: Do we have time for one more?

Q: The conversation has kind of gone beyond this, but I want to go back to the question Peter asked about the difference between experience and fact. We have an expression that we, in Canada, have

heard a lot recently, which is "I want to speak my truth." How do you, as a historian, feel when someone speaks about their truth? Are there different truths?

DS: That is a great question, and the answer is, of course, there are different truths. "Make America great again" sounds very different depending on the community and socio-economic group in which you find yourself.

Yes, you can have the same facts and different truths, for sure. A weird example is one for which I have been nearly murdered: Some people enjoyed the First World War; they got away from a restrictive family. They were 17, 18 years old; they got away from narrow, geographical economic circumstances.

They were put in a big organization. They got promoted. They were good. They were lucky. They did not witness the terrible shell strike. They were lucky with where they were placed, and they came away thinking "That was a good experience; I enjoyed that." They were serving alongside men for whom that trauma would last them the rest of their lives. Of course, you are right. You can go through the same situations and come away from different truths, I think, but we also need to be careful about what you say to people in an era of fake news and people showing memes on the Internet. One big meme on the Internet at the moment that the white nationalists are really pushing hard is that actually there were more white slaves in colonial America than there were enslaved Africans, because these people came here as indentured labourers from Ireland, Scotland, England and stuff. But that is simply not true. This particular narrative is being pushed. There are certain truths that we need to hold to support, sustain and push back on.

PM: Good question, though. It has been a big part of debate here for the last couple of months. There are different versions of the truth around one story; at least the proponents of different parts of the story argue, "Now, I am going to tell my truth." He can tell his truth; she can tell her truth. Leaves you wondering what is truth?

How do you define truth in today's world? Anyway, this has been great. And I know Dan echoes this, thank you so much for your questions and your attention.

KE: Our sponsor, today, will be giving the thank you. Izzie Abrams, please, come to the stage.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government & External Affairs, Waste Connections of Canada

Thank you, Kent. As Canadians, we have a deep, rich and proud history of having the news reported and history recounted, and nowhere is that better exemplified than with our guest speakers today, Peter Mansbridge and Dan Snow.

On behalf of the Empire Club and Waste Connections of Canada, thank you for the enlightening and entertaining dialogue we had today.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

I want to take a moment to give a couple of other thank yous as well.

We have some people who organized today. A tremendous amount of work went into this.

Nancy Hertzog and Elizabeth Wilson, thank you so much. Thank you very much. Also, Gordon McIvor, from the Empire Club: Thank you for all the work you put into this. Looking ahead, we have a couple of events coming out. We have Councillor Thompson who will be speaking with Jan De Silva from the Toronto Board of Trade.

He is Toronto's Deputy Mayor, and he is responsible for economic development in the city. We will have a great conversation during the lunch on May 16th.

We have an evening event organized by Mike Van Soelen, who will be the next President of the Empire Club.

He is the nominated President right now. He is organizing an event on May 22nd about all the various ways people, the outside influences in politics, are influencing the election.

Then, we have a sold-out event on May 2nd with Phil Verster from Metrolinx. Thank you very much for coming.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

PHIL VERSTER

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
METROLINX

WITH: TRANSIT RELATED DEVELOPMENT

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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May 2, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From One King West Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present Phil Verster, President and Chief Executive Officer at Metrolinx for today's topic, "Transit Related Development."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Phil Verster, President and Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx

Guests:

Ms. Lena Azzou, Chief of Staff to the President and Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx

Mr. Jens Goetz, Chief Executive Officer, Siemens Mobility Ltd.
Mr. Marty Harris, Senior Vice President & Executive Lead, Civil East, Aecon Group Inc.

Ms. Arielle Kadoch, Principal, Sector Leader – Transmission & Distribution (Eastern Canada), Stantec

Mr. Faisal Kazi, President and Chief Executive Officer, Siemens Canada Limited
Mr. Michael Kobzar, Director, Energy Management, Ontario, Siemens Canada; First Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Alan Mak, Chair, CPA Ontario; Partner, National Forensics Practice Leader, BDO Canada LLP

Ms. Marsha Seca, Vice President, Corporate Strategy, Infrastructure Ontario; Director, Empire Club of CanadaMs. Antoinette Tummillo, President, Antoinette Tummillo and Associates Inc.; Second Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

It is not the first time we have had a speech of great importance on transit at the Empire Club of Canada. In 1954, Peter Thorneycroft, President of London's prestigious Board of Trade came to Canada from England to address the Empire club and he opened the International Trade Fair.

Since the talk of the town was not only the International Trade Fair in 1954, but also the newly opened Yonge subway, Mr. Thorneycroft used his speech, entitled "Combined Operations," to talk about the newly minted subway as a shining example of co-operation between Great Britain and Canada.

Here is a quote from that speech: "The United Kingdom and Canada have learnt to cooperate with mutual benefit in exciting developments right across this country. One of the best examples is in this city is the form of the Toronto subway. Those beautiful cars in which you have travelled were built in the ancient city of Gloucester in the shadow of the Cotswold Hills. The rails on which they run were made in Canada and in the United States.

Those gleaming glass surfaces, which you have admired in the stations were rolled in Yorkshire and put together in Ontario. The signal system came from London. The steel, which lies embedded in the structure, was the product of the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg. Truly an international project."

Today, I know there is lots of talk about various governments and what each level will be responsible for.

The example I read you shows that in the past, we have dealt with levels of governments that were far from our shores to establish our GTA transit system.

Today, with a new provincial government, a re-elected Toronto city council, and a federal government that is vehemently seeking re-election, what could possibly go wrong? If we worked together in 1954, we can do it again today.

There are challenges. Challenges in building new transit in the GTA were well defined by a 2014 speech to the Empire Club by the Chair of Metrolinx at that time. "The success of Toronto must be the starting point for any discussion of transit and transportation. Our challenge is a direct consequence of our success. Our success as a city region has outstripped our infrastructure to accommodate our growth.

What was adequate in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s is not adequate for greater Toronto in the 21st century." To deal with these challenges, the new Ontario government has announced a new transit plan that includes uploading the subway to the province's control, and legislation on that will be introduced today. In that landscape, we turn to today's guest to explain it all to us.

He is the President and Chief Executive Officer at Metrolinx. He oversees a team committed to transforming transportation in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Prior to joining Metrolinx, he managed train operations, infrastructure builds and infrastructure management for passenger rail systems in England, Scotland and Ireland.

He began his career in his native South Africa in the electricity sector. He spent several years in the UK at Bombardier Rail and the Irish Rail. In 2011, he joined Britain's Network Rail where he managed the second largest route in the system. He ran Scotland's passenger rail service and served as Managing Director of Network Rail's East West Railway. Phil joined Metrolinx in October 2017. His comprehensive knowledge and extensive transit background has equipped him with the necessary tools Metrolinx requires to continue working toward delivering an integrated, regional transportation system that will serve the needs of residents and businesses for years to come. Please, welcome the Chief Executive Officer of Metrolinx, Phil Verster.

Mr. Phil Verster

Thank you very much, Kent. Thank you very much to the Club. It is fantastic to be here. There are so many faces and people I know and so many new people we will meet today. Those of you that know me will know there are probably two things that I am sort of switched on about. I want to get things done, and I fervently believe Metrolinx can always be better. Any organization I lead, I have this fervent belief it can be better at what it does.

When I got this invitation, it sort of puzzled me at what to talk about, because there is not much happening in transit, is there? I wanted to give a different spin to this discussion today. I asked my teams to go out and look for a single photograph of a picture of a big thing we do with a single caption to it. I want to do justice to what our Minister Jeff Yurek says to me whenever I meet him: "It's for the people."

And he used the expression yesterday: "It's for the real people." What are we doing on a day-to-day basis and what is real for what we deliver out there? I know, lots of nice philosophical debates about big things and what the future would look like, but you know what really matters is what we do now. I searched for all of these across the organization and got all this stuff back, and, by yesterday, there were about 120 ideas. I said to the team, "I only have three-and-a-half hours to present, so I cannot use 120." What I have done, today—and it is the first time I am going to do this, so it is probably going to fail—is I have taken 50 slides, and I am going to click through them really quickly. If you are here for three-and-a-half hours, you have been warned.

Let us see how far we get. The thrust of the presentation is about what is getting done. It is really urgent for all of us to strike the right balance. When we see things, we can sometimes get locked up into philosophical debates, while what is really important is to provide a service for those people every day that are dependent, those customers.

I say to my team when I am on the concourse at Union—and I do that every week, a couple of times—"I am humbled by what I see when people come off our trains and off our concourses and off the TTC, the huge number of people that are dependent on transit." And I think we need to ground ourselves in that philosophy of Minister Yurek. Let us go.

Downsview Park: Completed in 2018. New connection with Line 1. There are 69,000 people a year that benefit from this investment. Guildwood GO Station: New station facilities, new amenities, totally reworked platforms, totally different connections, pedestrian tunnels under the track, changes to the southern end of the parking space to give more access to our parking facilities.

Oshawa GO Station: 856,000 people that benefit from that every year, and $14 million was spent on it, on better facilities, more accommodation for retail capability, but mostly on simple things like washrooms, better reception, better wickets where we can sell tickets and where we can serve our customers, a keynote for us in our network.

Renforth: All the way, it connects 18 kilometres, with 12 new stations connecting us all the way from Winston Churchill through to Renforth. There are 10,000 people per day benefiting from this facility. The bus services here include Mississauga buses, GO buses. It is a fantastic service—really important for Mississauga.

York vivaNext: $1.7 billion, 9 million people, 9 million boardings a year, huge change. Much of that transit network has been reduced by about 35%, and the ridership is continuously increasing. A fantastic big impact, with 43 stops over a 34.6-kilometre network overall—a huge impact to that region. Now, let us look a little bit at stuff that is happening that most of us hear about or sort of experience. Depending on where you drive, you may experience it in terms of what we do at Eglinton, but where I daresay very many people are not aware of the huge amount of activity that is going on underneath the surface of Toronto is Keelesdale Station, which has got about 2,300 square metres of decking that keeps the station protected so that traffic can travel across it. Look at the cavern there of where the station is going to be. That is work that is in progress currently, aimed for completion by next year—and the surface is about the size of five basketball courts which covers the Keelesdale Station and the development, completion due for 2021. It is a very exciting first. This is the first station where work really started on the Eglinton Subway.

Eglinton Station: Eglinton has 269 square metres of excavation, the biggest on the whole route.

There will be stations about 20 metres underground. What is so exciting about Eglinton is that there will be 8,200 people in the peak period—which will be the morning peak—using this facility. That will tally up to around 20,000 during the period of a day. Think of Line 1 on its busiest part of the morning, when it would be carrying 35,000–40,000 people a day. Fantastic infrastructure that is being built now and being delivered now.

Sometimes the things we do is not always that visible. It is not always that clear, but let me show you this one, which I find really amazing. Not everyone would know that Eglinton Crosstown passes underneath the subway at Eglinton itself. When you look carefully, therefore, and you see those yellow pillars, and you see the crossbars or needle bars that go across—or I-beams that go across—they are, in terms of that excavation, part of a complicated engineering solution with a set of hydraulic jacks that sits across that red band of needle bars, allowing the excavation. And then, if there is a 3mm-deviation, those hydraulic jacks kick in to keep the subway that is above it at the right position at the right place and to minimize deviation, to ensure safe operation—3mm. Take seven business cards and put them on top of each other. Seven business cards on top of each other is the system's accuracy in terms of making sure the deviation on the subway is contained. This is a huge engineering important activity that makes the building of a transit possible. When you think of Eglinton itself, there where you see the 'D' is where Eglinton would pass through east to west, and you can see the subway where ‘A’ is, going north to south. Then there is Avenue. Avenue is a different technique of building a station. We call it ‘mining’.

We create the excavation on the side of the road and then tunnel and mine towards the centre area where we create the space for building the station and the track: 1,250 people per hour in the morning peak. Laird, have a look at that, the size and the scale of it. Laird would be where we have a portal where we exit on the eastern side of Eglinton. And the huge benefit of Laird being the way it is designed is we will have a turnback facility that will make sure that we can operate the services on time and very effectively and recover services pretty quickly. Mount Dennis: 3,500 people in the peak. Fantastic station, which will link up to a TTC bus terminal. We will create an interface with GO as well as with UP Express. Then, here are interesting things, again: Kodak Building 9 has a heritage interest, but it stood right where we had to dig foundations, so the 3,000-ton building was put on a frame and moved 200 feet out of the way to allow building work to happen and was moved back and retained. It will now become a secondary entry to the station as well as a big building for office space. Working closely with a community on something—that is crucial to community success as well as to heritage and to all of that. These things are not always known, but this is really cool stuff. Kipling Station: We are spending $73 million on that.

Look at it. It is going to be a facility that links the GO line, GO bus, together with TTC buses and the TTC subway as well. And so it is connected in a first regional multimodal transfer—first of its sort we feel, really, in a regional sense in Canada, and it is a huge regional mobility hub with great benefits. Eight hundred more parking spots are being added to the 1,600 we already have at Cooksville. New station building, new platforms, and 499,000 people every year benefiting from that. I think the importance here is we seem to forget that there is a lot of stuff happening on an ongoing basis. At Agincourt: 134,000 customers every year.

There is a new station building, a new passenger subway connection, and we are building a two-track section. At Agincourt, Milliken and Unionville, we are spending a quarter of a billion, $254 million, exactly, to get these stations into a good place. At Milliken itself, we are adding, obviously, the second track all the way up the Stouffville line. That gives us the opportunity to run trains at a higher frequency, so we have a big focus on delivering these stations as quickly and as urgently as possible. About 195,000 people every year benefit from that. At Unionville: There are 300 more stations, relocated platforms, modernization of the platforms and a big impact for that part of the line.

Bloomington is a brand-new terminus station on the Richmond Hill line. Roughly 253,000 people will be using this facility—our estimate. It is still new. Have a look at that huge parking facility at the back, with 1,070 new parking spaces, new bus drop off and terminal and passenger pickup and drop off facility.

Bramalea: We are adding 1,300 parking spaces to the existing 2,600. We are putting in a new pedestrian and passenger underground walkway, which consists in a total renewal of our access. You get access from Bramalea Road, and a better access from Bramalea Road and more facilities to make sure we get better change around of people at our station itself.

Confederation: This is a brand new station on the Grimsby sub, with big benefits for us as a connection just one step down from West Harbour. And there is a huge market to exploit in the Grimsby and Niagara Region. In Mimico, we have just completed, as we have announced and discussed, an agreement with VANDYK, which is the developer, about how we trade air rights for investment in our station. About 335,000 customers will benefit directly from a refurbished substation, which would not require any investment from the taxpayer.

Similarly, Woodbine involves about a $136-million investment, which we do not have to make, because we have secured that agreement and a deal with the developer of choice. Here, you can see, we took a little bit of liberty; it is not built yet, so we have taken a brilliant photo of one of the TTC stations on the recently extended Spadina line, and we will have the same ambition to create that type of feel that you get from those great stations. There are 13,600 people using 485 buses a day to travel from Union Station bus terminal. Here is our new bus terminal. It is on the ground level of the CIBC building down at the lakefront.

At Eglinton Crosstown, this is where we started to put tracks down. We have got 14.6 kilometres of track; the maintenance facility was built and opened in 2018.

That was a photo I liked because it showed a lot of activity, but it is now completed, so it is very dreary. There is a lot of concrete everywhere, but that photo shows the excitement of how much work has been done in this area.

Mount Dennis: This is the first place where we started to put down track, and that is completed and that is moving forward. On the Stouffville line, we are putting double tracking up there that will allow us to run a massively frequent service, very much aligned with some of the requirements of the mayor, as well as of our business case for GO expansion to achieve that high frequency from that part of the region all the way up the Kitchener line. And it is a very exciting forward way of looking. If you consider the walls on the side, these are sound protection for the local communities.

This was agreed to with the local communities and implemented and built with their support. On the Hamilton Junction, Hamilton line: We have done so much work on junctions such as this to enable us to run the services out to Niagara—real stuff getting into the ground. This allowed us, this year, to announce that services to Niagara will run four years early, which is an objective of our minister and our government. Similarly, we are spending just over $100 million on getting a tunnel built on the 401 to give us a further two tracks to expand the service on the Kitchener line, which is an unambiguously important objective for us because of the development potential it brings in that part of the province. Then, Whitby Rail Maintenance Facility, this is a monster of a facility. It is huge. It is one of the biggest facilities that I have ever been in.

This facility will help us to run the expanded services. We opened it last year. That was an $850 million investment. It sets us up and takes off the critical path that creating a facility that sets us up for the expansion of GO in the years to come.

Kitchener-Waterloo Facility runs 33 bus services in the region. A new facility serves that community to the extent that is really crucial. We have replaced six bridges on the Lakeshore West, all bridges older than 100 years.

Many of you in this room have been involved in some of these projects. This is one of the more interesting ones where we stopped services over weekends and packed in very small periods of time, huge amounts of working to get these bridges renewed. This particular Humber Bridge deck was totally renewed. It is about 300,000 tons of ballast have been moved in the recovery of these six bridges—huge works in terms of re-decking and renewal to last another 100 years going forward. These are key arteries for us, obviously, so it is really important to get this right.

There, you can see the track surfacing where we have very interesting and smart equipment. The yellow monster that you see there has preset panels of track that it puts down on the track and helps us to lay the track in a good and productive way. No presentation would be good without the

Pickering Bridge—infamous. It is the longest bridge: 250 metres. I am told it is one of the longest foot bridges in the world. It crosses 14 road lanes and four tracks. It is lit up at night, as you can see, lovely, lovely. And it took a long time to complete that. It is not an example of great work, but it is an example of lessons that, as an organization, we need to learn from and be better at. It is right to put that up there, because learning from what you do wrong is important.

Last week, the Bombardier vehicles were delivered to us. They were delivered a few weeks late, not a few months late. The Bombardier vehicle ran for its first time under power. It was a huge success because one of the first things that I, in my organization Metrolinx, have set out to do is to make us work like a business, to be more commercial in the decision-making we do, to be more commercial in how we think about our relationships and our contracts.

Good relationships are underpinned by good commercial clarity. In 2017, fixing the contractual issues in dispute with Bombardier was one of the first things we put in place.

That has enabled us to have the right leverage to make sure the delivery is what it should be and to have the first vehicles run on our own power, on our own patch.

Two-and-a-half years before completion of the project is exactly where we want to be. Then, we have got eight of these. These are probably the biggest locos in the world. This is called Tier 4. It is a diesel-electrical, which we have added recently to the fleet.

They allow us to expand our services significantly.

Working closely with Alstom, we have an alternative supply now in Brampton. That facility has been set up.

I would like you to look at this. What this shows is that from September 2017 to September 2020, we will add 50%—I will say that again: 50%—capacity to GO services. Previous estimates by GO was for much less, 2%–3% per year. We have looked at how to do things efficiently.

How do you run your fleet efficiently? How do you run your whole operation and your logistics efficiently?

Last year, we achieved 22.6%. This year, we are on target to achieve another 15% to bring us by the end of this year to a 40% increase in services. Our minister, Minister Yurek, is adamant that this is the type of strategy that is necessary to bring our services to the people of Ontario.

Kids GO Free is a really important announcement, really big step to get children under 12 to travel for free and to cultivate the service patterns, the service behaviours that we would like to see. On our PRESTO adoption rate now: A year ago, we were 12% or 15% for TTC. Yesterday, it was at 65%. The products we have rolled out on PRESTO—different monthly passes, annual passes and the like—over the last year, have made a huge difference. Therefore, PRESTO adoption is now so high across all of the agencies.

The momentum we have behind PRESTO is just magnificent, and it is fast. Our new app allows you to auto-load, for self-load. Customers' response to this functionality has been fantastic. At six stations, we have what we call PC Express, which is where people can order their goods and pick it up on their way home. It is supported by, as you can see, Loblaws and Fortinos. The $3.70 fare, which is a reduction of more than $1 has boosted our ridership significantly, and it is part of an overall integrated approach to get footfall and customs to resemble what we are putting in, in terms of infrastructure. By getting your price ratio right and your value for money equation, you encourage people to use the infrastructure we are putting in place. This was a big step for us because this brings us closer towards fare integration and working closely with all of the other municipal operators in our region. We have been working closely with Uber and other sort of ride-hailing firms to provide solutions for First-Mile/Last-Mile, for example. Uber has been a fantastic deal, and, normally, transit agencies in other parts of the world contend and compete with the ride-hailing firms.

We do not. We incorporated them into our solution, and that helps us a lot with First-Mile/Last-Mile solutions.

The pet policy is very popular. Then, we are into the LRT projects. Thirty-two million people will benefit from Hurontario, and, for Hamilton: 12.4 million. These projects are now moving forward and taking us forward as a region.

Finch West. I can say as much about Finch West as I can say about Eglinton, but we ran out of slides. I think here is the important thing. This is the second last slide. Here is the thing. When we talk about transit, there is so much to do. We must achieve quite a lot of things on different fronts.

On the one hand, we must get forward planning right.

We must come up with those solutions that really work for the people that are going to use it, but we must not spend too much time arguing about what the future should look like and forget about delivering what is needed today.

I think we are striking the right balance today. This year we have struck the right balance. What are the solutions that can work best? Then, let us talk about it amongst our organizations and amongst ourselves. Then, make decisions. Then, let us move and let us deliver. Many of you in this room are part of our delivery of these projects. For that, we are very pleased. The last slide is probably the one you have come for or to see, and it is probably the most exciting slide out of all of the others because there is such huge momentum in Minister Yurek's mind about what needs to be done to transform transit in the GTA—this solution or this proposed program of works. Because that is the way I look at it, as a program of four projects, and four to five big projects is substantial to the extent that with a momentum that is given to it will transform how the city works and how the interfaces to other modes of transit, such as GO, such as the regional services, such as the Mississauga MiWay service, such as vivaNext function.

Even to the extent that it creates connectivity out further to the regions with the expansion we are doing to GO creates a network that transforms the region. I think the huge benefit of what we are seeing, from an agency's perspective over here, is that the commitment out there, the excitement—you saw the minister yesterday at the Toronto Regional Board of Trade.

The confidence and the excitement he has in the program is huge. I think in this era that we are in, in the next four to five years, our focus has to be all ours in this room. We have to pull together, be as effective as possible, sufficiently as possible. Let us get to deliver as much as possible. Thank you very much for listening to me today.

Questions & Answers

KE: That was fantastic, Phil. We are going to do a Q&A session now. I am sure all of you are thinking of your questions. We are going to ask that when you do ask your question, state your name and the organization you are from. We have Jehan over here with a microphone; another is with Christine over here. Raise your hand if you have a question. While we are waiting for those with questions, I am going to ask you a question: There are so many projects you put up on the screen. What is the one that you think is the most crucial of all the projects you are doing?

PV: That is a really good question but I actually think they are all evenly important. As an organization, clearly, there are bigger value ones and huge ones, such as what we want to do with GO expansion, but every project affects the local communities. One of the first things we did as a senior management team in Metrolinx was to figure out, again, why we are here. We are here to support the communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area.

I take as much interest in what is happening at Bloomington as I take interest in what happens at Mimico. Getting that balance right, for us to always focus on the details, is really challenging. The last year and a half has been about how we change our organization to get better at this. Now, we are just talking infrastructure, but what about the other stuff that is important? Because one can easily just think about infrastructure and forget about the importance of getting fair strategies right. Consultation with communities—we put a regional roundtable in place to make sure PRESTO is on a better commercial footing as we have done in the last year. I think the challenge for us, as an organization, is to not pick favourites, to not pick what is the most important, but to constantly look at what our communities and what our stakeholders and shareholders are asking and to try and deliver all of that at the same time.

Q: How do you do? My name is John Campion.

I am a former President of the Club. I would like to know whether you think, in the planning that you have, you are creating a transportation system, or are you creating an entirely new Toronto? Considering what you build and how it is going to impact 50 years from now the city that we live in?

PV: Thank you for leading with an easy question like that.

Without a doubt, the second part of your question.

We are into building cities and communities. That is what it has to be. Let me give you an example. I personally think the Ontario line is very exciting. We spent a lot of time. We started in October. The minister gave us strong guidance and said go think about things; one more chance. We said to him, "Give us one more chance.

Let us think about how we can transform the city." I want to call out one part of the thinking there. If you start off—and I am not criticizing anyone or what has gone on before—thinking you are going to build railways first, you will make railway decisions. If you think you are going to build subways first, you make subway decisions. We wanted to build something that changes how the city thinks and works and interfaces. One really good example is the question of how we create an interface at one of the biggest stations we are creating.

That station is what I call the "Union Station of the East" or "East Harbour." We are working with the industry and the local developer, First Gulf, on thinking about how we create the station there where there is an easy interchange. If you just build a subway solution, you may decide to tunnel under the Don, and you are 42 metres deep in the ground over here, and you are 5 metres over here with GO and six flights of stairs to make a transfer. How is that going to work? If you cross the Don, you can put the two stations right next to another. People can probably walk across the platform. Is that not going to be easier? Is that not going to be more natural? Is that going to be perhaps more practical as well as our communities work together? Your question is really at the heart of good transit planning. Again, I am not criticizing anyone by having said that. I just think we should all be going through this stage, which we are doing now. We are working very closely with the City of Toronto, very closely with TTC and Rick Leary and his team. They are fantastic people in those organizations. We are building up a series of options to figure out how we make the Ontario line as effective as possible to achieve a city outcome and a community outcome rather than just be another really sexy train.

I like trains, by the way.

Q: Hi, my name is Arif Rafiq. I am with Esri Canada. The investments in the infrastructure are undoubtedly staggering. I have seen some of the investments that Metrolinx is making for the parking facilities.

You are expanding the parking facilities. I also saw the lovely Pedestrian Bridge on Pickering. Could you comment on how much of this infrastructure, if any, is going towards encouraging more active forms of transportation to get to the system, like cycling or pedestrians?

PV: I love that question. Currently, I am the proud owner of 77,000 parking spaces. I am in the process of building 23,000 more. I think more parking spaces is not the answer for transit. We have this huge dichotomy where the future of transit in the city of Toronto has to be about a network of connectivity whereby people can get out of the house, walk past the car that stands in the driveway, and find a way to get to the closest station, which is where the network comes in. There is a huge behavioural change, and that is one of the reasons why the example I gave you about how we make a solution where transfers between modes of transit is now so important. The easier you make it for people to travel, the better. I have got a very active agenda where I am currently approaching automobile manufacturers to say come and run an autonomous vehicle trial in my region.

Come and let us figure out how we agree how to overcome and figure out the regulations, so we can get an autonomous vehicle shuttle that runs automatically to my station and through the neighbourhoods. It is always full of six people or eight people, and that reduces car parking requirements and achieves more ease of First-Mile/Last-Mile connectivity. I have been bugging the ride-hailing firms. Personally, I can tell you, honestly, I use public transit all the time. I have made a conscious decision not to buy my own car. I Uber; I Lyft; I TTC; and I GO. I use MiWay, and I use vivaNext, and I use DRT when I am out in Durham, and I go all the way.

I run half marathons up in Collingwood and get an Uber driver up there. I do that because I fundamentally believe in transit. I think we must help figure out how we get new formulas to make it work better. Our stations are not built well enough for people to walk on sidewalks to get to the station. For years, we have not focused on the items you raise in your question, and we are looking at that now, more.

Q: **Hi, excellent presentation. Ziggy Krupa of Cedar Croft Consulting and current public appointee of RIBO and a current treasurer and board member of the Empire Club. You had mentioned the Mimico line and the partnership between private and public deal on the air rights over the GO station there.**

Could you share a little more about that? I think that is really exciting to hear something different about utilizing the space and the assets that the city has.

PV: It is a challenging equation because very often it is difficult to create a competitive environment around a location where there is already ownership of the root asset, the core asset, which is the property itself. Infrastructure Ontario and ourselves are putting together a joint team, and we have got a very well-developed strategy, which we are taking to government during June, about how to create the organizational and competitive market dynamics around what we do with sites. Very often, it will be a site such as the one at Mimico where there is an incumbent owner.

There is no one else that can really get the benefit of the air rights except the incumbent owner. It is now a question of value, and you say no if the value is not right, and say yes, if the value is right. The one thing about transit-oriented development (TOD) solutions that we are seeing—and we now have a funnel, a list of about ten or 12 really big, really important TOD opportunities.

Many people in the room are potentially involved in that. What we have seen in nearly each case is that the specifics and the nature of each of these deals is different. I think it brings a lot of philosophical issues with it in terms of how we do business and it brings challenges, too. How does an agency operate as a business and not as a bureaucracy?

Because developers would say to us in rooms that they are not so keen about doing business with you if you cannot be consistent with your decision-making and make decisions fast enough that can work with their timeline of decisions. Minister Yurek's real challenge to us is make this work. Figure out how to get transit that is in development into a place where it benefits the taxpayer and where it benefits communities.

I probably did not answer your question as well enough, but I want to give you that sense that transit that is in development is a fantastic opportunity for the private sector, the public sector to work together.

We, as an agency, are clued in with IO (Infrastructure Ontario) in terms of how we are going to tackle that. You could not really expect me to say more than that. Thank you.

Q: **Hi, thanks. Afternoon, Phil. It was a good presentation. It is always nice to see the delivery people recognized. With the exciting level of investment you currently have on your books with this future transformational level of investment that you are planning on making across a variety of areas, what is your biggest challenge within Metrolinx—part A? Part B: What do you see as the biggest challenges for the industries and companies that want to be involved in this journey that ultimately delivers that best customer experience?**

PV: Head and shoulders above everything else, the biggest risk for us, as an agency and for the industry itself is skilled, competent resources. That has dimensions to it at different levels. Government has acknowledged that there is an initiative that will work through all of the ministries to make sure that what can be done to broaden the pipes of education for artisan-ships and different crafts is broadened to get more competent people trained in the region. My biggest concern is senior level experience. I personally came to the region because it is so fantastic.

Toronto is a fantastic place to live. The challenges here are fantastic. I think we will continue to attract people that want to do that, but getting people to early stages of their careers to make big moves is not always possible. I think, collectively, all of us must work as an industry to bring more resources into the industry. Can I lift the second one out? I am fundamentally concerned about our construction techniques across our work sites.

Those of you that were sharpish about construction practices would have cringed when you looked at some of my slides. I cringed. There were photos of unsafe working practices nearly everywhere—equipment lying around where it should not be lying around.

I still put the slides in because I want to get slides out there, but I am worried about how we internalize as organizations safety into our way of working.

What I am used to in my own organizations in the UK and in that industry is significantly higher levels of safety. I think an organization that focuses on safety and makes it central is an organization that delivers well, that looks after its people well, typically meets budget, typically meets schedule.

If an organization is sloppy, you see it in safety, but you then see it in claims; you see it in rigour. It is a rule of construction that safe organizations are good organizations to contract with. In the next couple of years, we are going to drive really hard at—I am starting to not award contracts to contractors on safety criteria. I am really intent that what we have to achieve is a high level of safety in our industry. Those are my two biggest concerns.

Q: Hi, I am Helen Cook from OMERS. I was wondering what your plans are for a mobile app that we could use to pay as opposed to carrying the card.

PV: Thank you for that. We have demonstrated a mobile phone app that allows you to have a virtual PRESTO card. It is in the pipeline. I would not like to say much more about it now, except that it is going to happen.

Thank you very much, everyone.

KE: Good. Thank you.

I am pleased to welcome Mr. Jens Goetz to the podium from Siemens, to thank the speaker today. Thank you.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Jens Goetz, Chief Executive Officer, Siemens Mobility Ltd.

Thank you, Phil, for this fabulous and interesting speech. To me, that was more proof that whenever I meet with Phil, it is about change; it is about significant change; it is about change to the better; and it is about change happening.

I think you have seen in his slides lots of change, many construction sites going on, but there is also more than just construction.

Then we talked about safety. When I came here to Toronto about a year ago that was one of the first items which struck me, the safety mindset.

I found in my GO train seat, a little card saying, "Don't just sit on this; read it." I turned it around, and it was about safety advices. I felt, and probably you felt as well, that when Phil talked about safety, he is very eager about that.

When you step on a platform with little children, and you tell them not to walk there close to the yellow line—that is something which probably many of us do, but you still see passengers, not only here in Toronto, but all around the world, for whom it is very different. It is a safety risk. Whatever we do, safety is of utmost importance.

All the rest beyond, it is what we have seen and what we are going to see in the future. It is really a challenging time being here, being part of this industry.

There are lots of things to be done. Thanks for the presentation, and thanks for having me here.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thank you. This is a great presentation today. We had representation from the union, from the people who do the construction at Aecon, from Siemens who builds trains.

We have had all of you today at the Empire Club of Canada. I also want to mention that Councillor Thompson came in the room after we did the beginning intros.

I noticed him. Thank you, Councillor. I know you are acutely listening about what is going on here and are watching what is happening today.

Councillor Thompson is speaking to us two weeks from today about the City's vision on a number of things at the Empire Club of Canada at the Arcadian Court on the 16th.

I want you guys all to come to that. We will also have Jan De Silva from the Board of Trade. She is going to be sitting down to moderate with him. We will have a Canada Fresh Voices Panel, a political panel on individuals who are looking at politics for the federal election. We will have Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations on May 22nd. Lots of events going on. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming today.

Meeting adjourned.

THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA
THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA

Head table guests pictured prior to a live edition of CBC's Power and Politics hosted by Vassy Kapelos, which took place on the Empire Club stage on June 10, 2019.

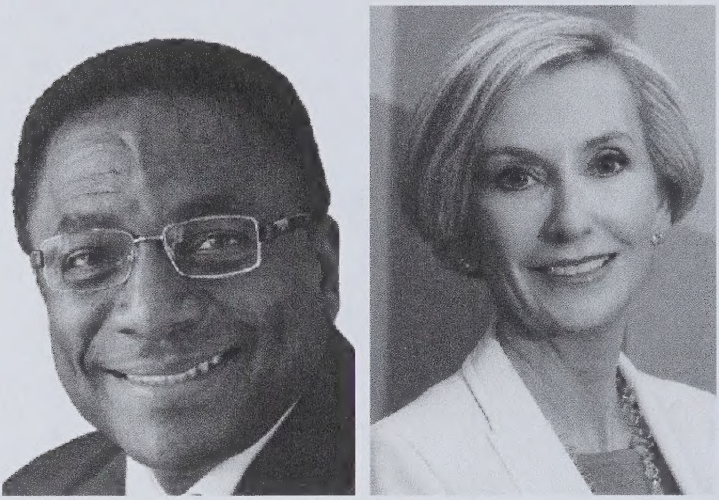
THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA est. 1903

Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations addressing the Empire Club on May 22, 2019 with a discussion on why First Nations' Priorities Need to be Canadian Priorities.

President Kent Emerson introducing panelists Jeff Ballingall, Taylor Scollon, Rick Smith, Jasmine Pickel and moderator Adrienne Batra, who formed Canada's Fresh Political Voices: A Federal Election Panel on May 22, 2019.

President Kent Emerson pictured with the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development for the traditional book signing prior to the Minister's speech on May 21, 2019.

The Empire Club Presents



COUNCILLOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR MICHAEL THOMPSON

IN CONVERSATION WITH

JAN DE SILVA: VISION 2020 – BUILDING THE CITY OF TORONTO'S PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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May 16, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present Councillor and Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson in conversation with Jan De Silva of the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

An ambitious clapper at the Head Table got everyone going this morning. Today's topic is "Vision 2020: Building the City of Toronto's Prosperity and Competitiveness."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Ms. Jan De Silva, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Mr. Michael Thompson, Councillor for Ward 21 (Scarborough Centre) and Deputy Mayor, City of Toronto

Guests:

Mr. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government and External Affairs, Waste Connections of Canada

Mr. Dino Chiesa, Chair, CreateTO

Ms. Jenna Hay, Head, Policy Development and Regulatory Affairs, Lending Loop; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Claire Hopkinson, Director and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Foundation

Mr. Andrea Merluzzi, National Manager, Business Development, Air Canada

Mr. Allan Scully, Executive Vice President, Development, SmartCentres

Ms. Leigh Smout, Executive Director, World Trade Centre Toronto, Toronto Region Board of Trade

Ms. Antoinette Tummillo, President, Antoinette Tummillo and Associates; Second Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

When we talk about a vision for the city's prosperity, it is essential that we have today's speakers as part of the conversation. That is because of the transformative work that they have done to build new prosperity across the city. When it comes to Toronto, there is so much that goes into economic development, much more than the standard things that we think of like attracting FDI, transit, housing, and quality of life. They all play a significant role.

Doing so while working to make Toronto a global tech hub is even more challenging. Speaking of which, we are at the cusp of Collision, North America's fast-growing tech conference, which is being hosted here in Toronto in just a few days. Councillor, I know you had a thing to do about bringing this to Toronto, and I want to thank you for that.

As we look at how all these different aspects of economic development intersect, perhaps one of the most interesting examples is the King Street Pilot. Following the launch of the project, the city created the "Food is King" promotional campaign to support restaurants along King Street.

It featured a $15 Ritual credit to be used at 40 different restaurants along King, which was a big partnership between the City, the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas and Ritual, a great example of the City working together in a creative way with the more established organizations and new players alike.

That kind of creativity is especially important in what any observer would describe as an uncertain time for the city.

It is no secret that there are new budget challenges that have surfaced because of the recent provincial announcements around funding to the City of Toronto, and these challenges are of significant magnitude. It is also no secret that Councillor Thompson's creativity and nearly a decade of experience as Chair of the Economic Development Committee will assist the city in coming up with solutions necessary. When there is no door, Councillor Thompson is known to open a window. It is just like The Sound of Music.

In this time of constant change, a time in need of new solutions, we are all here, one, to understand his vision for the city; two, to listen to the role that the private sector plays in the city's future prosperity; and, three, to recognize the work he has done for Toronto in the past.

Councillor Thompson is Chair of Toronto's Economic and Community Development Committee and a member of the Executive Committee, not to mention Deputy Mayor.

Now in his fifth term as councillor, Michael has earned a reputation as one of Toronto's hardest working and most effective political leaders.

He created the first-ever TTC transit strategy for Scarborough, a strategy designed to significantly expand and enhance public transit services for all Scarborough residents.

Throughout his years on council, Michael's unrelenting drive for public safety in the face of increased gun violence ultimately led to the development of a city-wide Community Safety Plan.

Michael's commitment to developing Toronto's city-wide economy is well known. He maintains a widespread network of business relationships that have helped the city to enhance business retention, promote growth and increase private sector employment.

His active engagement in business has helped speed the launch of new ventures, resolve business and residential conflicts and gain business participation in a wide range of community-building initiatives.

He has also attracted billions of dollars in new investments to the city, contributing to a more robust economy and substantial job creation. Michael is a firm believer in the critical value of culture and builder of strong communities.

When he first took office, he co-founded the Taste of Lawrence Festival, which brings together tens of thousands of people each year. In 2013, he led the City's effort to create a new arts and culture plan that provided a bold, new roadmap for cultural vitality and strengthened arts spending. Michael was also the first Chair of the Toronto Music Advisory Committee and played a key role in efforts to attract international film and television productions and studio investments to Toronto.

Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Thompson.

Mr. Michael Thompson

Good afternoon, everyone. Are we in Toronto, or are we in Detroit, or Buffalo maybe? Good afternoon, everyone.

Thank you. Thank you very much for joining Jan and me this afternoon, and thank you, Kent. I want to thank our host, the Empire Club and Kent Emerson, the President, for having me here today. We have actually had an opportunity to be here for other events. This organization has such a storied history, and I am delighted to participate and take part in this event today.

I would like to thank, also, our sponsors who have been acknowledged already because, without the sponsors, in fact, this event would not be successful. May I ask you to give our sponsors a big round of applause, please.

Finally, I would like to thank Mike Williams. He is the tall fellow that is walking around here somewhere. Well, he is sitting right now, I am sure. He is the General Manager for the EDC (Economic Development and Culture).

I would also like to thank all the members of our Economic Development and Culture team for their dedication and great work over the years. As Kent has mentioned, this is my tenth year chairing the economic development file for the City of Toronto.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am honoured, actually, to have this opportunity to discuss some of the work that we have done at EDC, as well as our vision for an even more prosperous and competitive City of Toronto in the coming years.

There is so much that we have to look forward to, so much work that we have to do and, of course, we cannot do it without you. Before I dive in and Jan and I start to talk, I would like to take a moment to, in fact, share with you our vision for the 2020s. Before we get into that piece of our conversation and so on, I would just like to take a moment to provide you with a summary of some of our most notable recent accomplishments because I think that helps to set the table with respect to the conversation that will take place shortly. From 2015–2018, we oversaw investment and an overseas trade mission in order to bring back approximately $1.5 billion in foreign direct investment for the City of Toronto. We established 27 international relationships to assist Toronto businesses seeking to enter global markets.

We engaged with over 1,500 companies through the international trade training program in partnership with the World Trade Centre, and Leigh Smout is here, who runs that organization on behalf of the Board of Trade.

Thank you Leigh, for what you have done. Big round of applause for Leigh.

In 2017, Toronto became the first Canadian city to be designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts.

The award recognizes our leadership in film, music, digital media and other forms of cultural expression using technology. We rank amongst the top cities in the world because we recognize the important contribution culture makes to our prosperity. Claire Hopkinson is here, and I saw Sara Diamond as well, two of our leaders in this field.

Thank you very much for being here. Ladies and gentlemen, culture is, in fact, vital in creating and attracting opportunities for our city. In fact, a livable city without culture is no city at all. In fact, the opportunity of culture in our city creates an environment in our city where people want to live, work and play. While the feeling of uncertainty is rising around the world—in many places there is such great uncertainty—Toronto is seen, globally, as a reliable and a strong economic partner. In fact, it is viewed as one of the safest places to invest. We are very happy and delighted with that.

As Toronto business leaders, you probably share my view that Toronto is, in fact, the best place in the world. Now, through our collective work, the entire world is recognizing that Toronto is not only a cool place, but it is a great place to invest. Our secret is no longer a secret. We think that there is great opportunity for investments to come to our city. We have, in fact, accomplished a lot, but we know there is still work to do. We must capitalize on our momentum by continually pushing forward to build a prosperous city for all of our residents.

In a city where diversity is our strength, we cannot continue to accept the status quo. For too long, too many of our residents have been overlooked and under-represented in decision-making levels. Diversity does not automatically translate into equal opportunity. A truly prosperous city is reflective of the race, ethnicity and experience of all of its residents.

Thank you very much for being here and enjoying lunch with us. I look forward to discussing the city's progress and goals with Jan and answering your questions. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

KE: Jan De Silva is an experienced international business executive with a track record of excelling in on-the-ground leadership roles.

As President and CEO of the Toronto Region Board of Trade, she is spearheading efforts to make Toronto one of the most competitive and sought-after business regions in the world. Jan, thank you very much for joining us, today. This is going to be a fantastic discussion. We are all looking forward to it. Ladies and gentlemen, please, give a round applause for the President of the Board of Trade, Jan De Silva.

Deputy Mayor and Councillor Thompson in Conversation with Jan De Silva

JDS: Thanks, Kent. Thanks to the Empire Club. Delighted to have this chance to have a conversation with the amazing Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson.

As the Deputy Mayor has indicated, we do a lot of work together because economic development really—the magic is when we get strong leaders on the political side, great staff at the city, and a business organization that is bringing some funding momentum to the table as well. Delighted to have this conversation.

Kent, you said the title of this event is "Vision 2020: Building the City of Toronto's Prosperity and Competitiveness." Actually, knowing this man, the title of this discussion is "Getting Things Done." That is what it is all about with the Deputy Mayor. Kent, you talked about something really exciting that is starting on Monday. It is not summer. It is not nice weather. It is this massive tech event called Collision. The Deputy Mayor has been an active instigator in helping to bring this major event to the city. In fact at our gala annual dinner in February, Paddy Cosgrave, the founder and CEO of this event was talking about why Toronto is the city for this event. This is an event of unparalleled scale for the city. Deputy Mayor, what do you want the visitors to our city to take away from the amazing event that is happening next week?

MT: First of all, I am really delighted that Collision is finally here. I was on the stage last year with just getting—I was actually going on and Al Gore was coming off the stage. He said to me, "Are you trying to take this from New Orleans?" I said, "Actually, we've got this. It will be in Toronto next year, but Al, you're invited to come."

JDS: And he is coming.

MT: Exactly.

JDS: Good job.

MT: We have what I believe are some of the most brilliant people in the entire world in this city. They are innovative; they are focused on creativity; and their technology is essential thematically to what they are doing. Most people do not realize, for example, that everyone has a cell phone; your touchscreen was developed here in the city of Toronto, not elsewhere. Most people think it is elsewhere. What we want to do with respect to this tech conference is to actually utilize this as a showcase, a feature, to show creativity, to show Toronto at its finest, to be able to demonstrate to the influencers who are coming that this is a place to invest, that this is a great city for everyone who comes. We welcome 30,000–50,000 new people into the city every year. They come in with a tremendous amount of talent. We create a space for them to be able to then, obviously, utilize the talent to actually help others and such. We want to demonstrate that this city is a great place for innovation in technology for investment.

We want to be able to drill that down into then creating sustainable opportunities for jobs, so that the residents in Toronto will have opportunities to be able to prosper and to develop their own goals and objectives, whether or not it is good schools for their kids—and we have many great schools. We want to expose our city to the world, because we are, in fact, not competing against Mississauga or Markham or York Region. We are competing against the world. When the world comes and sees the technological innovation, whether or not it is a DMC and our institutions, the level of education that exists in our city, they will take notice and they will want to come and invest. I think it is an important opportunity using Collision as a vehicle.

We will also generate, over three years, about $147 million. It is an investment that we have made into this particular initiative. We are all going to be the better for it, and the exposure to us is going to be enormous.

One final point and this is that we have spoken with Global Affairs. They have indicated this is the largest number of delegations that they are welcoming for a single event. We have 77 delegations from all over the world, some of them from our sister cities, that we have cultivated over the years, creating opportunities, creating connections, so that we can actually see investment that is real, whether it is arts and culture, because we use technology to drive many things, and we use culture to drive all of the things that are business-related in our city.

JDS: Let me just put the economic impact in context.

The Collision is the little sister of the world's largest tech event called Web Summit. That has been running in Lisbon for about eight years.

A couple of months ago, the government of Portugal announced that they had just signed a ten-year exclusive with the same organizers of Collision to keep Web Summit in Lisbon. What they did is they offered €100 million. That was Lisbon and Portugal's commitment to expand the convention facilities and hotel capacity, so that Web Summit can grow. It is over 75,000 delegates that come now. In exchange, Web Summit signed a $3 billion break fee. If they leave any time within those ten years, they have to repay the Portuguese government €3 billion. That is the economic impact that Portugal has tracked from eight years of having Web Summit. There is a ton of economic impact that is going to happen to the city with a major event like that.

MT: That is absolutely correct.

JDS: Thanks for your role in that. You were also there last year in November.

MT: You were there.

JDS: I know. We had a big Canadian delegation in Lisbon, encouraging people to come to Toronto. Thank you Air Canada for the flights. That is great.

The Deputy Mayor and I have spent a lot of time in some of the major cities around the world. I do not know if we have got media in the room. Sometimes our hometown media loves to reflect on how many flights people are on. Well, let me tell you, there is huge economic value of repeat and multiple visits to these major markets, to both learn and to cultivate opportunities for the cities. Can you share a little bit about some of the work that has been done and where you are starting to see some payback, maybe in the film sector because I know you are just back from L.A.?

MT: Right, thank you. We were just in L.A.—"we" being the mayor, myself and Councillor Fletcher. What we recognize is that—and I led the first mission prior to the mayor being elected under the former mayor, Rob Ford, and I was the only person that was allowed to travel under that regime, and the objective was that we need to promote Toronto. We need to look at how we can expand our reach, globally. And the film sector—it is important for us to actually work with the industry. I guess some ten years ago or so, the industry was around 17,000 people working in that industry. Now, there are about 30,000 people working in that industry.

Our trip, our annual trip to Los Angeles is there to talk with the decision-makers who are deciding where films are actually made, deciding where to make those particular investments. We also listened to them to hear from them what their concerns are, and to understand what we need to do to attract more investment in the film sector. I am very pleased to say that this time around, we did hear some interesting things from them.

We had some really good meetings. Those meetings, actually, are going to lead, in my view, to probably another 7,000 or 8,000 new jobs. We are talking about a potentially $5-billion investment in central Toronto, north central Toronto. We are talking about another probably about a $300–400 million investment in Scarborough, of all places. Sixteen years ago, when I spoke to some of the business owners there about the fact that we should be looking at the film and television sector, building studios in the area, they all thought I was a little bit off.

Today, when they are signing their 20-year leases now with some of the companies that are going to be locating there, the jobs are coming. All of these things are taking place based on our objective to work in collaboration with the film and television sector to ensure that when the films come into our city, we welcome them, because we know it is not always comfortable for some residents, because they complain about the filming and so on taking place. We remind them as to what the benefits are.

The opportunity for our city is enormous, because we have to compete against Los Angeles, Vancouver—Atlanta, perhaps a little less now, based on some of the policies that they have come out with lately. I think that we can take advantage of those things. It also provides us, as a community, with a focus in terms of how those investments will benefit all of us. A new area that we have started to work on, because it is really important that we have talent is we are starting to work with some companies in identifying the need to ensure that we have the onramp opportunity for young people and people in this industry to have opportunity to be trained.

There is a collaboration with respect to the colleges and other institutions, so that we can build on it because it is really important that while we focus on industry development and so on, we also focus on people development, because they go hand in hand together because it is about sustainable growth, job opportunities, and, at the end of the day, it really is about prosperity and how people benefit from the time and the investment that we spend on their behalf through these types of engagements in terms of the travel.

JDS: Where we are trying to partner with the city, as well, is trying to help with that talent definition, where the talent gaps are, so that we can be working with post-secondary. An example related to film is Jonathan Ahee, who I think is moving on to a new role. He was head of our local film sector union. He was telling me we have had to turn away a couple of period films, major productions here, because we did not have enough period wig stylers. There are jobs across all components of the film sector that we never even think about, but those are really amazing jobs that can be unlocked, so it is a huge benefit.

MT: Can I just add something? One of the things that we discussed when the mayor and I were in Los Angeles just last week is they told us that an area that we, in Toronto, should be focusing on is film writing.

We were a little bit surprised. They said the writers determine where the films are actually produced because they cast either—just the way they sort of write their script to show specific cities and the sort of milieu as to what they want. When those writers create those scripts they usually go to those places where they identify. We are now going to develop a relationship between Los Angeles and Toronto, and we are going to drill down in terms of creating opportunities for young men and women who want to be in this particular industry because that is really important whether or not you are talking about technology or you are talking about the film sector or any of the other sectors that we actually have in our city. We want to make sure that there are opportunities for people to be engaged and to fill the void because of that skills gap. If you allow a situation where you are not replenishing it, then you are going to fall behind.

Because we are not competing with Mississauga and our region, we are competing globally; we are also competing with South Africa and other places like that where film is made.

We have got to make sure that all of the elements are connected and it is viable, so that when we look at a greater vision for the city and the growth of our industries and the sectors, we have all of the different elements weaved into the opportunity for greater success for all of us.

JDS: These kinds of insights and partnerships do not happen with a single trip. If there is one message I can give—and it is certainly something we have been talking about at the city—it is about the repeat visits and strengthening those partnerships and getting more of those insights and encouraging people to come back.

It is really critical that we keep you on an airplane as much as we can.

MT: As much as I can. In fact, I have to say this, and, Air Canada, of course, I have to say this: Traveling is not as sexy as most people think it is. It is difficult, quite frankly. Here is the thing. In my capacity, I have an obligation to work for all the citizens in this city to be able to sell Toronto as a place where the talent exists, where diversity exists, where all of the things that you need to be successful are.

And the most important ingredient with respect to that is the very people who are the backbone of our community and our city, because, without the people, all the other things are not as important, quite frankly.

JDS: The size of city council has reduced, so workload has changed a little bit. Your responsibilities have expanded substantially to include many aspects of community development. On the surface, fire, ambulance, municipal housing, youth, senior services, recreation are now reporting to your committee. How does that align with your focus on economic growth?

MT: That is a really, really good question. We asked ourselves that question, as well, when I sort of was told that this is the portfolio that you are going to be responsible for. Let us leave aside the economic development component part for a moment and touch on what community development is, what community development is all about. First of all, it is about people.

It is about neighbourhood. It is about your community. It is all the things that you need. If we are going to ensure that there is access to the economic development piece, which is jobs, creativity and so on, we have to ensure the services are in place. We have to ensure we have healthy communities. We have to ensure, for example, that there is appropriate daycare for mothers and fathers who need that for their children.

We have to ensure that we have a healthy community, healthy neighbourhood. We have to make sure, for example, that in your neighbourhood, you have got green space; you have got parks; you have got the trails; you have got all of the things that you need to wake up to on a daily basis to ensure that you have the infrastructure, the foundational things to allow you then to focus on creativity, focus on the job that you are responsible for, focus on the opportunity to ensure that wealth can be created. The other point is that if we do not provide all of these types of services through our focus on economic development and community development, what we find is that if we do not offer services, for example, day care, a person will make sacrifices with respect to his or her work. A mom, for example, who is a talented person, who wants to go to work, will have to make a choice whether or not she wants go to work or take care of her children.

The thing is, we do not want them to have to make that choice. We want to provide them with affordable daycare and facilities, so that their children can be well taken care of, and then they can take their talent as part of that workforce, so we do not want to see a skills gap that would exist otherwise. I believe that the co-twinning of those relationships between economic and community development is extremely important because we are also focusing on some of the social service issues as well, which is TESS, for example.

Toronto Employment and Social Services comes as part of economic and community development.

We are able to have first-hand understanding as to what the challenges are for the people in the community and then to build, if you will, a policy and/or program that connects them into the job opportunities and the training. At the end of the day, as I said, the most important ingredient in terms of what we are trying to address is a fundamental issue in terms of how we make people's lives better, how we create the opportunities to respond to the things that they need in order then for them to either go to work or be in the community—how do you create this healthy ecosystem or this relationship so that all that is needed is there when it is needed?

JDS: Exactly. It is something we are also partnering very closely with you on because all of our members talk about talent gaps. There just should not be talent gaps in this marketplace. It is about how we define where the jobs are and how we help people stream into post-secondary opportunities. I know LiUNA is one of the sponsors here today. I saw Mike Yorke is here from Carpenters. You folks are very actively at the table with us just looking at the construction sector to say how many jobs we need to fill just to get things built in the city, and 146,000 jobs are what we have calculated to be required over the next decade in the city just to get the infrastructure projects we know has been funded by the federal government, let alone what the province has just announced. There is a tremendous wealth of opportunity. It is about how we create that opportunity. I know that as we were prepping for this you talked a lot about the fact that diversity is our strength but diversity does not mean that everyone is getting the same opportunity. Did you want to speak on that?

MT: Yes, I do. I sort of touched on it in my remarks.

We have, if you look in this room, amazing men and women of all different backgrounds or ethnicities and so on. In Toronto and in Canada, we want to celebrate that. Celebrating in and of itself is not the end goal. We also want to make sure that people feel and actually are able to experience the ability to make decisions that involve them, that they are part of the input that creates opportunity and so on. When we create this sense of prosperity, it cannot be for some people and not for other people. It has to be for all of us.

One of the really interesting things about our city—and I guess elsewhere in Canada because we are unique in this way, and we care fundamentally about people first—is that we have settlement opportunities for newcomers and so on. We have asylum seekers. We have all types of people who are coming.

The federal government just gave us, recently, $45 million to help with respect to settlement. They gave us $26 million more and, of course, it is not enough, of course. There is a lot of work to be done. I say this because it is really important. When I look at a place like Shanghai, for example, there are 24 million people living there, between 700,000–800,000 new people coming in every year. They are not coming from abroad. They are coming from basically the rural area into the major cities. In Toronto, we have about 35,000–60,000 people, depending on whose numbers you use, coming into our city. The difference for us is we offer a lot of settlement opportunity.

We offer an opportunity where people can get connected. We also have opportunities where people can train and re-train and so on. Of course, it is not enough, but we are actually focusing a lot of attention on that.

We get a diverse workforce. We get different people coming in and talent. If we do not have an opportunity where people can feel genuinely that their skills are recognized and are actually wanted to actually make our society better, then we lose that skill component. It becomes a deficit for us. As we make decisions, we should make it based on abilities, not on what someone looks like or their ethnic background and so on. I do not think anybody in this room is guilty of that, but there are some who are guilty of that. What we are saying is that we want to remind you that talent is extremely important. What we want to do is we want to build on that, and we want to be enriched as a result of the talented men and women who will come from all over the world. I will give you just one final example.

I met a young woman a couple of weeks ago. I was at an event in my ward. I thought that she was someone who had been involved in a variety of things for a long period of time, by just the way she was talking and the way she conducted herself. I went over and introduced myself. She told me she had only been in Canada for less than a year. She was involved.

She had a job. What was important that she told me was that she felt that the people who helped her to get settled in to learning a little bit about Canadiana activities and approach to things here really had her best interest at heart. What was she doing? She was talking about Toronto. She was doing things to help us, making a contribution. When we open our minds to the recognition that all people can do great things, we actually become better off, and we eventually become more prosperous, because all of these wonderful people are going to be doing great things that actually help us all. At the end of the day, we are and should be one big family, even if we are welcoming a new addition to the family on a daily basis.

JDS: I can keep going on with questions, or we have got some time for audience questions? Does anyone in the audience have anything they wanted to ask the Deputy Mayor? Show of hands. I can keep going.

MT: Keep talking.

JDS: I am happy to. I apologize that this is going to sound a little self-serving, but bear with me. This gentleman and I—we have been traveling all over the world together. We have been working really, really closely with economic development from activities like our World Trade Centre and the Trade Accelerator Program that has helped hundreds of companies activate an export plan to our Market Activation Program that is actually curating business delegations from particular sectors to go to particular growth markets.

I think there has been so much we have accomplished because you have held us to task around data tracking everything. From your perspective and not just with an organization like ours or the Empire Club, why is it important that there is collaboration between your committee, the economic development group at the city and the business community?

MT: I think collaboration is everything in terms of our focus and our attention.

Let me just take you back a second. When I first became the Chair of EDC, which was in 2010, one of the first things we did was that we reached out to the business community, asked them this question: Do you know about the city's Economic Development Committee? Michael Williams, I think, had just joined us at that particular point or maybe a year earlier.

Many did not either know what we did, or some did not actually care. What I did was I reached out to a gentleman by the name of Blake Goldring.

He is a Chairman and CEO of AGF Management and others. I said we would like to sit and talk with him about how we can work together and how we can reach out to a broader group of business leaders in this city to first of all ask whether or not we were relevant to them; secondly, if we were not, what we needed to do; and thirdly, whether or not we can sit together and bring together a collaborative approach, put a plan together. They agreed. We, Bill Dobson, and others, your predecessor, were there—Carol Wilding and so on. We sat together with our staff, team, and over many months we came up with a blueprint. It was called a "Prosperity Agenda for the City of Toronto." Subsequent to that, we put together a plan for collaboration.

When we bring the expertise from the private sector, NGOs, academia, unions and other organizations, we get the best input from everyone to be able to address some of the fundamental challenges that are facing our city. We never take an approach or look at a situation without having some goals and objectives, recognizing that there is a problem to solve.

You cannot solve problems by yourself if it is a big city-wide issue. The City of Toronto, itself—well, we are the City of Toronto—cannot solve all of our problems, so it is important to collaborate. We get the best and the brightest. We get the input from everyone.

The interesting thing is, what we get, which I believe is extremely important, is that opportunity where people believe in what we are doing, and they want to work with you. They want to actually be part of the solution as opposed to be part of the problem.

When you get that energy from people, it is amazing the reach that we can achieve.

May I give you an example? We had identified the aerospace cluster as an area that we believe that Toronto needed to play a greater role in. We have got this great space at Downsview. We got together with Centennial College—Centennial had the aerospace campus in my ward, a very small one—and UTIAS and others and so on, and we talked about a game plan.

We put together a committee at the city, which I co-chaired with another councillor who is no longer a councillor, Maria Augimeri, because it was in her area, the Downsview air base. We worked with the Department of National Defense. We worked with Canada Lands and a variety of others to identify what it is we were trying to do, which was we wanted to be part of this community. Centennial College also wanted to open a campus on that Downsview Lands. And all the monies were not in place, so we all worked together, put our heads together, approached the government, Stephen Harper at the time, about funding for this particular campus and to get started. Probably about three weeks ago, we opened the new Downsview Park Aerospace Campus on that location.

What is really interesting is that the young, talented men and women who are in that program and the leadership that this collaboration brought together give us proof in the example that, in fact, if we put our heads together, there are so many great things that we can do for this city. This city generates 25% of this country's GDP. This is the engine that makes Canada work.

If this engine does not work because we are not creative, the country does not work. That is my view because I have another view of the city, which is that this is, in fact, a city-state, and we have to act accordingly when we compete globally.

JDS: As you can see, I rightly re-titled this event today as "Vision 2020: Getting Things Done," with this gentleman here. While the Board of Trade is very focused on trying to make Toronto one of the most competitive and sought-after business regions in the world, and the Deputy Mayor agrees, he wants to take it a step further and make it one of the most competitive and sought-after regions, making it an environment that has an opportunity for everyone. Deputy Mayor, thank you so much for sharing your thoughts and your experiences, today.

A round of applause for Deputy Mayor, Michael Thompson. Back to Kent.

KE: I would like to call on Andrea Merluzzi from Air Canada to give the thank you today. Thank you for sponsoring, Andrea.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Andrea Merluzzi, National Manager, Business Development, Air Canada

Good afternoon. I was going to say something about Air Canada, but I think that Jan and Councillor Thompson have already covered that for me. Thank you for doing that.

Dear friends, today's conversation between two champions and amazing advocates of our city left me personally with the absolute certainty that the future of Toronto is bright. It is shaped through the capable hands of people like our very own Deputy Mayor and City Councillor, Michael Thompson, and the Toronto Region Board of Trade President and CEO, Jan De Silva.

Thanks to your vision and hard work, you continue to show what effective, relentless leaders of our community do to keep inspiring others by showcasing a proven record of achievements that we can all benefit from. On behalf of Air Canada, I sincerely thank you for motivating this community and for paving a new path for generations to come.

Getting things done is what we need to hear and more so what we need to see. We are witnesses, and at the same time, key players of a new era founded on collaboration, just like we heard, competitiveness and aspirations, making Toronto the epicenter of a new cultural, social and economic reality. All this also because of you. Councillor, Jan, thank you.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thank you so much. One of the greatest compliments to Councillor Thompson would be that ten years ago, there was a different mayor in Toronto, so he has been appointed by a different mayor and survived through three administrations. In this city, that is a big deal. Congratulations on your speech today and all kinds of things in your life. Thank you very much. At the Empire Club, we have a bunch of events coming up. We will have the Honourable Navdeep Bains on Tuesday. That is going to be a fantastic event. We have an evening event following that on May 22nd, “Canada’s Fresh Political Voices” to talk about a lot of political things.

We have the National Chief, Perry Bellegarde, on Wednesday. Today, we launched our 36th and 37th events.

We have launched an event "CBC's Power in Politics," featuring Vassy Kapelos sort of doing an in-person version of Power in Politics, here, on the Empire Club stage.

We also have launched a "Women Who Build" event on June 13th, in the evening. LiUNA is sponsoring that.

Thank you very much for sponsoring that. It is talking about some of the women in the sector and their challenges and successes. There will be a great networking event in the evening. I just want to bring everyone's attention to one final event. I am going to be leading an event about white supremacy and anti-hate on June 13th. I challenge many of you to support this event. Come to it.

Sponsor it. Councillor Thompson is sitting at the Head Table. There is a lot of stuff that is happening in Toronto that we do not like to talk about in terms of some events that have happened to our city in North York and other places.

We do need to talk about that a little bit more. Any corporate community members that want to be involved in this event, please, approach me. I would appreciate it. I think these events are harder to do, and that is why sometimes we do not do them, but I am going to do it. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

THE HONONOURABLE NAVDEEP BAINS

CANADA'S MINISTER OF INNOVATION,
SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WITH: FUTURE OF DATA IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: MINISTER BAIN'S VISION FOR CANADA AS A GLOBAL LEADER IN TRUST, PRIVACY AND INNOVATION

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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May 21, 2019

Advances in technology in the last five years alone have allowed information sharing between individuals and organizations in ways that have altered how business and individuals interact around the world. Data is a new currency.

It drives decision-making; it anticipates consumer behaviour; it forecasts world events; and it provides consumers and organizations—many of which are in the room—that can take hold of its power with advantages.

It is why the Empire Club of Canada, having presented Kyle Dubas and Bobby Webster, general managers of the Leafs and Raptors respectively, around how big data is changing professional sports, has already jumped into this topic this year. It was a fantastic event.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Canada's Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Mr. Adam Felesky, Chief Executive Officer, Portag3 Ventures; Executive Chairman, KOHO

Ms. Melissa Kargiannakis, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Skritswap

Mr. Sam Sebastian, Chief Executive Officer, Pelmorex Corp.

Ms. Nicole Verkindt, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, OMX

Guests:

Mr. Patrick Dalzell, Director, Government and Stakeholder Relations, Bruce Power

Mr. Kevin Dougherty, Executive Vice President, Innovation and Partnerships, Sun Life Financial Canada

Mr. Paul Fogolin, Director, Policy and Public Affairs, Entertainment Software

Association of Canada; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Debbie Gamble, Chief Officer, Innovation Labs and New Ventures, Interac Corp.

Mr. Alok Kanti, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bayer Canada

Ms. Karin Stephenson, PhD, Manager, Commercial Operations, Nuclear Operations and Facilities McMaster University

Everybody recognizes the opportunity and potential of using data for purposes that we have not yet even dreamed of and the capability of social media to break down barriers to create more human interaction, but there are two sides of this coin. When data is not used properly, there are negative consequences, including privacy breaches.

Advances in social media have also brought on the golden age for groups spreading hate or misinformation, which was once relegated to handing out pamphlets on a street corner, Yonge and Dundas. Concern all around has brought new scrutiny by governments and consumers. One of the largest outpouring of concern came from an incident where Facebook alleged that a third party had misused Facebook data. Fifty million users were involved, and that data was extracted and shared further to assist a U.S. presidential campaign. In 2018, the U.S. Senate even called a hearing about this with CEO Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook.

The hearing focused on the practice of third party data use and distribution. The Senate looked at the role of social media platforms in detecting threats of foreign intelligence such as misinformation campaigns by foreign governments and many other items.

Meanwhile, the Government of Canada has been dealing with a Canadian version of similar threats, challenges, opportunities here at home. What is exciting for all of us today is Minister Bains is here to launch the Canadian Government's Digital Charter and to explain how he has looked at the balance between citizen protection and the recognition that data is an important factor driving today's economy and represents huge opportunities for a lot of you, for Canada.

Minister Bains, the Empire Club of Canada is honoured to have you here at this momentous occasion.

I know you have been busy in your portfolio. Since 2015, your government has created almost one million jobs, in part, due to the many policies you have launched and developed.

The Innovation and Skills Plan, the first industrial policy plan in Canada in a generation, promotes super clusters, venture capital investments and foreign direct investment. Let us get started.

Today's guest is the Member of Parliament for Mississauga–Malton and a member of Privy Council. Since he was first elected in 2004, he has served in various roles, including Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Paul Martin and critic for Public Works and Government Services and many other portfolios.

Minister Bains is a former adjunct lecturer at the University of Waterloo. He is also a former visiting professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management.

His private sector experience includes several years at the Ford Motor Company of Canada.

Minister Bains has a Bachelor of Administrative Studies from York University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Windsor. He holds a CMA designation. He is a long-time resident of Mississauga, where he lives with his wife and two children.

Ladies and gentlemen, for a second appearance at the Empire Club of Canada, please, welcome the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, the Honourable Navdeep Bains

[VIDEO.]

The Honourable Navdeep Bains

That is my presentation, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for coming out. No.

[Remarks in French.] Bonjour tout le monde, c'est une honneur et privilège d'être ici aujourd'hui, je voudrai remercier Kent Emerson et Empire Club pour votre invitation.

Today, I am really delighted to be here with so many familiar faces and so many new faces to talk about something very exciting in terms of our economy going forward.

By now, ladies and gentlemen, a number of you will have heard of this statistic before. It is a very important statistic: 90% of all the data in the world has been generated over the last two years. If you have heard of this before, it was because it was true as a data set and a stat in 2016.

Why am I saying it today? That same stat has been true ever since 2016. Imagine that curve of how much data that we are generating. Almost everything we do nowadays leaves a data track behind, whether it is monitoring our heart-rate on our treadmill or buying a new pair of shoes.

It is not surprising, absolutely not surprising that the top five companies in the world that are publicly listed deal with data. It is no understatement that in today's world, data drives business. The advantages are very clear.

We have talked about these advantages very consistently for our society and for our economy. Just ask a cancer patient who got an early diagnosis; just ask the farmer who has cut her pesticide use in half. The opportunities are everywhere around us. Alongside these great opportunities are also challenges as well.

We cannot ignore some of these new, complex challenges that have emerged. At the heart of these challenges is the question, the fundamental question of trust. How can Canadians believe in the good of this online world when they are confronted with a video of 51 innocent people gunned down during prayer in Christchurch, and that video goes viral? How can they trust their data will be used to improve their lives when it is used to bombard them with disinformation? Here is the thing. Innovation cannot happen at the expense of privacy and data and personal security. In fact, the opposite is true as it pertains to the digital world: Only by building a strong foundation of trust will we be able to reach our full innovative potential. Business models that rely on leveraging data for innovation and growth must put an even bigger premium on trust.

According to our numbers, 90% of Canadians would turn off the tap to a business that misuses their data. Think about that—nine out of ten Canadians. We need to get serious about rebuilding trust because people are currently losing it.

In the 21st century, either we build that trust and compete in the data-driven digital economy, or we do not compete at all. That is why I am happy, today, to present Canada's new Digital Charter. This charter is made up of ten principles based on Canadian values against which all future government policies, programs and legislation will be tested. Through this charter, we will build a foundation of trust for our digital and data-driven economy and society, as a whole.

As a result of extensive consultations with Canadians, business leaders, academics and my fellow parliamentarians as well. Many people in this room participated in this process, and I want to thank you personally for your leadership and stepping up for Canada. Our first principle is universal access. Our commitment since coming to office has been clear. Canadians will have equal opportunity to participate in the digital world, and the necessary tools to do so. This is really about access, connectivity, literacy, and skills. This is what the first principle is about. The second principle focuses on safety and security. Canadians will be able to rely on the integrity, authenticity and security of the services that they use, and they should feel safe online.

The third principle is about control and consent. By that, I mean Canadians will have control over the data that they are sharing, who is using their personal data, and for what purposes, and it will be able to know that their privacy is protected.

Our fourth principle will ensure transparency, portability and interoperability. Canadians will have clear, manageable access to their personal data and should be free to share it or transfer it without any undue burden.

The fifth is about delivering open and modern digital government for Canadians. Canadians will be able to access modern digital services from the Government of Canada, which are secure and simple to use. My good friend and colleague, the former president of the Treasury Board, Scott Brison, would say, "We cannot be a Blockbuster government serving a Netflix society."

Our sixth principle commits to ensuring a level playing field. The government will ensure fair competition is happening in the online marketplace. We want to facilitate the growth of Canada's businesses and affirm Canada's leadership on digital and data innovation while protecting Canadian consumers from market abuses.

The seventh principle commits to using data and digital for good. Specifically, we will ensure the ethical use of data to create value, promote openness and improve the lives of people at home and around the world.

Our eighth principle reassures Canadians that they can depend on our strong democracy. We will ensure the transparency of political discourse, defend freedom of speech and protect against online threats and disinformation designed to undermine social cohesion of the integrity of elections and democratic institutions. Building on Canada's commitment to the Christchurch call to action, our ninth principle is a commitment that Canadians will be free from hate and violent extremism.

Simply put, Canadians can expect that digital platforms will not foster or disseminate hate by extremism or illegal content. Finally, ladies and gentlemen, the last principle is a commitment to strong enforcement and real accountability. That is to say that there will be clear, meaningful penalties for violations of the laws and regulations that support these principles.

Today, I will share with you the first actions I will be taking as the Minister Responsible for Innovation, Science and Economic Development, to turn these principles, these very important principles that I have outlined, into action.

First, I am happy to share with you a set of policy proposals and reform in Canada's private sector laws and, yes, many of you are familiar with this acronym PIPEDA because privacy can no longer be an afterthought for companies. Whether it is privacy by design or another system, privacy has to be built in at the very front of the business model. I have also written a letter to the head of the Competition Bureau to ensure he has the tools necessary to promote competition and create a healthy environment, especially for small- and medium-sized businesses, so that they can continue to thrive and innovate going forward.

With the advice of the new Canadian Statistics Advisory Council, we will review the Statistics Act, to ensure Canadians can trust the way their data is handled by the world-class national statistical agency.

Finally, the Standards Council of Canada will launch the new Data Governance Standardization Collaborative to better coordinate the development in compatibility of data governance standards in Canada, contributing to the creation of a level playing field in the digital economy.

In the coming weeks, my colleagues will have more to say about the steps we will take to preserve the integrity of our democratic institutions and keep Canadians safe from hate, anonymous threats and cyberbullying.

Across government, we will update the Privacy Act and examine frameworks for open banking.

All of this is consistent with the principles that have been highlighted in the Charter. Together, we will lay out the steps necessary to enforce these principles and make sure all Canadians benefit from the enormous opportunities created by the digital and data-driven economy.

Ladies and gentlemen, these innovations have already reshaped our lives. As our prime minister said last week, “The pace of change has never been this fast in history.

Yet, it will also never be this slow again." Just like all of you, our government is bullish on the great potential of our country and for this new digital age. With our Innovation and Skills Plan, we have hedged our bets on Canada's innovators. We recognize how critical it is to support them because they are the job creators and they are representative of a workforce that is the envy of the world. With the Digital Charter, we now have the principles that will guide us, but governments cannot do this alone. We need businesses.

We must work together. We need to develop that partnership, that collaboration. That is the only way we will succeed. That is the only way we will build trust in our digital institutions you rely on to innovate, grow our economy and create good-quality, middle-class jobs.

I look forward to making this happen with you, and we are very excited about the next chapter in implementing these principles going forward. Thank you very much. Merci beaucoup.

Introduction to Panelists

KE: Thanks, Minister. Now, it is time to bring the panel to the stage. Our first panelist is the founding CEO of Horizons Exchange Traded Funds. He has worked at JPMorgan Derivatives group in New York and started his career in investment banking with CIBC.

He sits on several leading fintech boards, including Wealthsimple, KOHO Financial, Borrowell, and Clark.

Please, welcome the CEO at Portag3 Ventures, Adam Felesky. Our next panelist is the founder and CEO of Skritswap, a Silicon Valley VC Fund AI startup that swaps complex documents into plain, easy to understand language, almost like a mortgage with a grade six reading level.

She currently sits on the boards for both the Center for Plain Language and other boards. Ladies and gentlemen, please, put your hands together for Melissa Kargiannakis. Our final panelist has the experience and responsibility for all of Google's operations in Canada as the vice president and managing director of Google Canada, where he was posted from 2013 to 2017. He joined Google in 2006 in Chicago and held a variety of executive-level roles in the U.S. before moving to Canada five years ago. He is a member of the Business Council of Canada and a director on several boards.

His current role is at Pelmorex. It is one of the largest weather, data and multiplatform media companies around the world, operating Canada's national emergency alerting system, Alert Ready. Please, welcome the president and CEO of Pelmorex, Sam Sebastian.

Today's moderator is passionate about leveraging the talents of entrepreneurs and innovation. Named "Canada's Woman Entrepreneur of the Year" by Start-Up Canada in 2017, she has had a knack for finding industry gaps and building innovative platforms in technology to fill them. Speaking to the importance of entrepreneurial and disruptive thinking, diversity in leadership, technology and innovation, she empowers audiences to turn their ideas into success. In 2012, she founded and launched OMX, the only online platform of its kind that manages complex supply chains in the mining, energy, infrastructure, and aerospace sectors around the world.

She also appears to be on a one million boards, in chambers and councils that I will not read to you the list of. A frequent commentator in the media, she is a technology columnist for Vanguard Magazine, and often appears on CBC, BNN and Newstalk 1010. She was previously a 'Dragon' on CBC's Next Gen Den, which focused on early stage production. Please, welcome commentator, Dragon, tech entrepreneur, and founder of OMX, Nicole Verkindt.

Panel Discussion, Moderated by Ms. Nicole Verkindt, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of OMX

NV: It is great to be here. Thank you very much, Minister, for those comments. That was, I think, really helpful for everybody to understand this Digital Charter and understand just how wide-reaching and ambitious it is.

I know, for me, over the weekend, I heard a little bit about it, but I did not really have a full appreciation for how much there is there and the connection between the business community and how those two things are so closely connected. If we have all agreed that the world is going to be changing quite rapidly, especially, over the next 10–15 years, what is the one thing that you would like people to remember, say in 15 years, about this charter and how it is has helped Canada in the tech community and in the business community?

NB: You are absolutely right. This is a very ambitious charter. It is very comprehensive and extremely broad.

It really speaks to the whole government approach and so many different aspects to it that touch so many ministers and portfolios, and so many different aspects of our lives. I would say if we would look 10, 15 years from now and look back at today and say what happened, it is really about laying that foundation for trust because, if businesses are to succeed online, they need to have trust of their consumers. They need to have trust that people are comfortable going online and recognizing that their privacy, that their data is protected.

This charter really says privacy is absolutely essential in terms of people's ability to control their data, who has access to their data, understanding issues around consent, for example, or even talking about enforcement, to make sure it is meaningful, that people actually respect our privacy laws. I would say the legacy is to make sure that Canadian businesses—this was a turning point where we are the go-to jurisdiction when it comes to trust, where businesses in Canada can continue to grow and thrive and where other businesses want to come to Canada because of the laws that we have in place.

Because of this Digital Charter, there is now a framework and a set of policies and programs that provides predictability for businesses to continue to succeed.

NV: 'Predictability' is a word I think a lot of businesses really like. For me, I know that is really helpful in understanding how this Digital Charter be a competitive advantage for the tech community. I will start here with you, Melissa, to explain how you see that connection. It is not just a regulatory framework. How do we see this as our competitive advantage?

MK: Absolutely. When we look at the opportunity that we are faced with right now in Canada, using the Digital Charter as a competitive advantage enables us to build responsible companies that can still grow and still be very valuable. For example, in our company, we use data that does not have personal information attached, and we allow our users to strip away and decide what is not saved in our databases. We make that very clear and very up front at the point of use.

NV: It is part of your marketing almost.

MK: Compared to the labyrinth of other settings when you talk about consent and control, all the other large tech companies that are not Canadian have these labyrinths of settings you have to mine through to try and find where you can actually have control over your data.
Then, when you make those changes, unfortunately, what we find out is, actually, it did not make the change.

You have to go somewhere else and change another setting altogether. It provides us an opportunity to still collect the data we need to make valuable companies and put users in the front seat of that and making it just so clear and easy to understand.

NV: Absolutely, and just before we got up here, I heard an example that I think you provided about how the data can be spun as something really positive for users.

They would have control. If they are able to download data, for instance, they can use that. If you could just elaborate on that.

AF: A great example would be wearables. Can you imagine a world where we could download our wearable data, give it to a broker or a third party who could auction our life insurance and offer better premiums for those who—?

NV: Show how often you really run or not. Might be bad for some of us.

AF: Another example would be cars are now telematic machines. If we were able to download our data from our driving, we could have a third party auction our auto insurance because we are better drivers. I think distribution curves of risk are going to be more segmented and personalized by accessing your own data for good.

SS: I think it is a roadmap for good business, frankly.
I think it strikes a good balance between innovation and the need to continue to build out functionality and new product development that leverages data. But at the same time, it balances safety and trust and openness and accountability with users. If anything, we operate a global business. We are the third largest weather player in the world. When I am over, outside of Canada, it is an asset that we are a Canadian firm because folks across the world trust Canada as a trusted country.

That is a competitive differentiation we have right now. This charter allows us to continue that competitive advantage because we will be out in front of kind of the next evolution of change, which is digital and data.

AF: Maybe I could just add, I think what is great about this charter, as well, is one of the challenges we do have is our regulatory framework in Canada with a provincial versus federal. We have got multi-jurisdictional bodies from OSFI to others, including the Competition Bureau.

I think laying a charter provides a framework for everyone as they think about their own road map, whether you are a regulator or a policymaker, a corporate or innovator, to think about where we are going. We can start planning today versus waiting.

NV: Hopefully, it simplifies it as opposed to adding to it.

AF: Exactly.

NV: That is a great point. Maybe, Minister, if you could address that. How does this charter give Canadian innovators and Canadian SMEs an advantage, or will we be disadvantaged in working with against sort of the large companies, globally? Melissa alluded to that.

NB: No, it clearly provides benefits to smaller- and medium-sized businesses in Canada because of that predictability. I think that is very important. One of the aspects that I mentioned was, obviously, changes to our privacy legislation. I talked about significant enforcement mechanisms around serious and meaningful fines; I talked about consent and having plain language and not those long, complicated user agreements, and I talked about data control in terms of mobility and portability.

The other area that we also put forward in our plan is sending a letter to the Competition Bureau to say there are data monopolies that are being generated.

Are there barriers to entries for smaller- and medium-sized businesses, and do we need to re-think our competition law in that context as well? The objective is to make sure how can we have a level playing field for Canadian businesses to succeed and grow and look at the laws to make sure that they reflect the changes in this new digital world that we live in. All of this, fundamentally, is about trust. We want individuals to feel empowered and that they have trust and confidence online, but we also want businesses to have that predictability and then Canada to be that go-to place. This is the place where if you want a seal of approval when it comes to trust and in terms of your ability to succeed, you want Canada to be that jurisdiction. I think this framework as articulated by some of the other panel members, the principles really provide that guidance to individuals, so they understand their rights and responsibilities, and to businesses as well.

NV: Guidance for all foreign corporations operating in Canada.

NB: Absolutely, yes, this applies. The idea is if you do not follow Canadian privacy law, there are going to be significant fines.

NV: That is the key part.

NB: That is right. You have got to follow the laws of this country. You have to make sure that you adhere to the privacy principles and the legislation that we have, PIPEDA, as I alluded to in my remarks and the changes that we are proposing. If you do not—and when I say ‘significant fines’, I am talking about a percentage of revenue. I am talking about really limiting your ability to collect data or collect revenue through ads—serious, significant, meaningful fines as a consequence for not really protecting privacy. If you do not follow privacy and the laws that we have in place, it undermines a trust issue that we are trying to rebuild.

NV: It is just so difficult, I imagine, to figure that out because it feels like all these tech companies are operating this world, and then you have to come into this universe where it is just hard to track.

MK: They are incented by the data. That is what their business models are made on. I think there are two really unique opportunities here. That is why I love the strong enforcement and real accountability components of this charter, and I am so glad that you spoke to them more recently, but the piece really is that with the actual accountability. We have an opportunity to change things. Just like how GDPR created in Europe a ripple effect where everyone’s inboxes were flooded about a year ago, but that was for all organizations, and they applied it across all of their documents.

What happened was it still takes, I believe 72 days to read Instagram's terms of service and privacy policy, still, even with GDPR.

NV: I guess no one hears about it.

MK: I am excited about the opportunity to cause this ripple effect and to change business models and no longer make the user be what you are selling and no longer make our personal data be the monetization strategy of these organizations. There are other ways that we can monetize and build big businesses with different business models that I think that this charter will catalyze.

NV: Absolutely. I used to always say data is like bacon; it is the next thing. When you are investing in tech companies, you want to understand their data strategy.

I do not even like bacon, so I do not know why I said that.

NB: It is relatable. I am vegetarian, but I can relate.

NV: So am I. The future economy is so data-driven, this could be a big advantage for Canadian industry.

Any final comments, then? I know the Minister is on a very tight schedule.

AF: I would just add that in the globalization of our economies that large incumbents increasingly have to focus on high-value customers, and it is creating an under-banked in the banking world, the underserved in the small business world. Through data and the power of technology, we can increasingly give access to those that are underserved today, and I think it is a huge opportunity.

NV: Yes, absolutely.

SS: The last thing I will add is trust with the user and the consumer was critical for business even before we had digital. It is still just core infrastructure. It is a value.

It is a basic of building a good business. I think businesses continue to maintain that as a critical success factor as everything moves over to digital and data becomes that much more important. You just have to apply that to the digital world as well. The Charter helps do this. I think if you are a good business player and you are a good actor and you keep the user first in mind, I think it will help support that, especially, here in this country where I think we can continue to innovate and differentiate.

NB: Just very quickly on that point, it really is a principles-based approach, so we are not trying to be too prescriptive here to cause any unintended consequences because we want to protect privacy. We want to protect individuals; we want to make sure people have confidence when they are navigating the digital world.

It is nothing new. Previous business models—I use the banks as examples—were built on trust that you can deposit your money, withdraw your money, et cetera, and that they will be around. It is designed to make sure that we also foster an environment for businesses to grow because the opportunities are enormous. We have generated, as I said in my remarks, 90% of the total data that we have seen in the last two years. We are only using a fraction of that, half a percent of that.

NV: We are only going to see that increase so much with the Internet of Things and all this other data.

NB: That is right. There is going to be ten connected devices per person in the next four years. You can imagine all the data that is going to generate. We want to make sure it is in a usable format. That is why Canada is also going to play a leadership role when it comes to developing standards—so the Standards Council and this collaborative that we are putting forward to enable businesses to be able to understand how the data can be used and collected as well. It is really exciting, the opportunities to protect individual privacy, but also to see Canadian businesses now play a leadership role in developing standards and innovating and growing.

NV: Yes, I think it says so much that you have invited the business community up here to discuss it.

Thank you so much for your message today, and thank you to everyone for joining us here on the panel. I think Kent is going to wrap it up.

KE: Thanks, everyone. I am pleased to welcome—and I know, Minister, you have to sneak out. If you are sneaking out, I think no one will even notice. I know you have a busy schedule today. I am pleased to welcome Pat Dalzell, from Bruce Power, to the podium to thank the speaker today. Thank you.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Pat Dalzell, Director, Government and Stakeholder Relations, Bruce Power

Thanks, Kent. I will keep this brief. Minister, thank you very much for joining us today. I would also, obviously, like to thank the panel. Such an interesting conversation.

Obviously, these principles are really going to set the baseline for Canada to grow and develop our economy through innovation. I am with Bruce Power. We are very happy to sponsor these kinds of conversations and events.

Bruce Power—just as a bit of background—is the largest nuclear operating facility in the world, located on the shores of Lake Huron. We produce about a third of Ontario's electricity, about 30% below the average cost to produce residential power. That is a mouthful.

The reason we like to be part of these conversations is that we really, truly believe that innovation is what drives our economy.

These conversations and setting up these principles, these guiding principles are what really allow us and the rest of the business community to innovate and grow the economy. It has allowed us to phase off of coal in Ontario.

It has allowed us to innovate, find new efficiencies in our reactors, so that we can extend the life of our facility out to 2064, producing emissions-free power for the next five decades.

It is also our next big step is producing medical isotopes, something that has never been done at a power reactor before, but will soon be done right here in Ontario.

Really, I would just like to thank the Empire Club, thank the sponsors, thank the Minister, and thank the rest of the panel, today, for coming out and continuing this conversation. It is very important to all of us. I would just like to offer one more round of applause to the panel.

Note of Appreciation, by Kent Emerson

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for coming today. Today, we also launched our 37th event, "The Rise of White Nationalism in Canada," which obviously has a social media component. It is a difficult event to do.

Some people said that is a hard one, but I want to challenge everyone to support that event, to come out, to sponsor that event. It is a very difficult event, and we are going to do it.

It is on June 13th, and we will be announcing the location soon, but it is on our website. We also have launched a "Women Who Build" panel, featuring the Honourable Minister Mary Ng. It is an evening event on June 13th.

We also launched, just on Friday, the CBC's "Power in Politics" event. We will be doing a live show right on the Empire Club's stage with Vassy Kapelos, and we will have a number of other events. Thank you very much supporting this one.

Ladies and gentlemen, meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

NATIONAL CHIEF PERRY BELLEGARDE

ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS,

WITH: FIRST NATIONS' PRIORITIES NEED TO BE CANADIAN PRIORITIES

Welcome Address, by Ms. Kelly Jackson, Associate Vice President, Government Relations, Marketing, and Communications, Humber College; Director, Empire Club of Canada

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May 22, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you just joining us through our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting. Today, we present National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Assembly of First Nations.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

Mr. Perry Bellegarde, National Chief, Assembly of First Nations

Guests:

Mr. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government and External Affairs, Waste Connections of Canada

Mr. Daniel Brock, Partner, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP

Ms. Tabatha Bull, Chief Operating Officer, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

Mr. Mike Martelli, President, Renewable Generation, Ontario Power Generation

Ms. Jennifer McKelvie, Councillor for Ward 25 (Scarborough–Rouge Park), City of Toronto

Ms. MJ Perry, Vice President and Owner, Mr. Discount Ltd.; PhD Candidate in Theology, University of Toronto; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Jennifer Rowe, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs Ontario Power Generation Inc.

Mr. Larry Villeneuve, Director, Indigenous Relations, LiUNAMs. Lorralene Whiteye, Graduate of Paralegal Program at Humber College; Indigenous Outreach Coordinator, Aboriginal Resource Centre, Humber College

For 115 years, the Empire Club has provided a forum for speakers to engage and debate, advancing the dialogue on issues of importance to Canada. While our name harkens back to an older time, and toasting the Queen may seem old-fashioned, we are surprisingly, to some, a forward-looking organization, committed to celebrating multiple histories and stories, engaging in challenging discussions and advancing the relationships critical to Canada's evolution.

Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in this country. A few years ago we hosted a conversation about reconciliation on Bay Street, identifying opportunities for the corporate sector in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action.

Today, our speaker's topic is broader. From education to economic development to environmental protections and creating a just, diverse and safe society, there is no shortage of shared areas of interest between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians.

Yet, when it comes to shared experiences and quality of life, the gap is significant. When thinking about reconciliation, a key question is: How do we move forward together to recognize and address the inequality that exists and the numerous misconceptions that many still have?

Through the "Closing the Gap" platform, Chief Bellegarde and the Assembly of First Nations have kept this question front and centre on the national political scene.

He has been relentless in his focus on achieving real, measurable progress across the priorities that matter most to First Nations peoples. Under his leadership, the Assembly's agenda has directly influenced the federal government's planning and priorities. According to Chief Bellegarde, the inequality gap is holding us all back from building healthy and thriving First Nations and a stronger Canada. That, in itself, is a powerful statement on what he will be speaking about today, why First Nations' priorities need to be Canadian priorities.

Perry Bellegarde was re-elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in 2018. Originally from Little Black Bear First Nation in Treaty 4 Territory, he has held a number of leadership roles at all levels of First Nations governance, including Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatchewan Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations.

Chief Bellegarde is a strong advocate for the implementation of Aboriginal and treaty rights, presenting at the national and international levels, including at the United Nations.

He has been awarded—and it is a long list, so I chose a few—the Confederation Medal, the Saskatchewan Medal, the Queen's Jubilee Medal, on two separate occasions, and, this year, the Province of Saskatchewan recognized Chief Bellegarde with the Saskatchewan Order of Merit.

He has spent the past 30 years putting into practice his strong beliefs on the laws and traditions instilled in him by the many chiefs and elders he has known over the years. Please, join me in welcoming National Chief Perry Bellegarde to the podium.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde

Thank you so much, Kelly. ***[Remarks in Cree.]*** Just to my relatives and friends here, I said I will speak a little bit in Cree. I am just going to say a little bit in Cree.

[Remarks in Cree.] I am happy to be here.

[Remarks in Cree.] And I acknowledge you all as friends and relatives. I said one of my spirit names: King Thunderbird Child is who I am. I also said where I am from.

[Remarks in Cree.] And I pointed at my lips.

[Remarks in Cree.] Little Black Bear First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory.

As well, I want to acknowledge and thank Kelly for that introduction, as well as Jennifer, for the acknowledgment of the land and territory here. Thank you for that.

We always say to all the members of the Empire Club, to all the dignitaries and friends and relatives in attendance, I say a big thank you for being here. To everyone, I always say I shake hands with each and every one of you in a respectful and humble way.

A big sincere thanks for coming here and again, to those of you I have not met, I have already introduced myself in my language. I have done the formal way of introducing myself in Cree, and I am the National Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. The AFN, it is the national organization in Canada representing First Nations. There are upwards of 60 distinct First Nations people in Canada. Here, I am referring to the original First Nations of the lands, not the reserves or the bands of Indians, but I am speaking of the Cree people, the Anishinaabeg people, the Dene people, the Haida people, the Mi'kmaq people, the Mohawk peoples, the Chehalis people, the Halkomelem people, the 60-plus different Nations. Our people live in towns and cities and on more than 600 reserves spread out across the country.

I will break it down quickly for some of you. There are 203 in British Columbia; there are 47 in Alberta; 74 in Saskatchewan; 66 in Manitoba; 134 in Ontario; 47 in la belle province de Quebec; 13 Nova Scotia; 15 in New Brunswick; two in PEI; two in Newfoundland; 14 in the Yukon; 28 in the Northwest Territories.

I know the numbers because I need 64% of those chiefs to vote for me as National Chief. I am elected by those chiefs from across our territories in what we now call Canada. Those chiefs are, in turn, elected by all their citizens and all their First Nations on the reserve and off the reserve. They represent all their people. I want to talk to you today about the relationship between First Nations peoples in Canada, what is it based on for our people, how we are doing, and what we should be working on together.

Reconciliation is a big part of that picture. It must be based on finally changing the fundamentals of how our people live in Canada and how Canada engages with us.

You will see we have made progress, but there is much more work to do. Some of the things I say today may challenge your assumptions about First Nations people and our shared future together. Being here, today, I ask for things,

things like your ears to be open and your hearts to be open while I map out some of our history, some of our progress and some ideas for a path forward together, because I always say this: Nobody is going anywhere in this country.

You are not going anywhere; your children are not going anywhere; your grandchildren are not going anywhere, and neither am I. Let us roll up our sleeves and get together and build a better country together because nobody is going anywhere. That is what I always say. Let us work together.

I have said I am from Little Black Bear in Saskatchewan, the First Nations that is part of Treaty 4. I always say it is a strong treaty territory. I grew up out on the rez,, that is what we call it. "Where are you from? I am from the rez."

I grew up in Little Black Bear. I learned about the treaties and the treaty relationship that we have with the Crown and I learned about that from our old people, the Elders, the knowledge keepers, the wisdom keepers. There is a ceremony about that treaty. Every time I talk treaty, what do I pull out? Well, lo and behold, I just happen to have a treaty medallion with me.

What does this treaty medallion represent? It represents first, our relationship with the Crown. This is Queen Victoria. We have a relationship with the Crown. Nations make treaties. Treaties do not make Nations. The relationship with the British sovereign is very important. Canada was a colony of Great Britain right up until 1982. These treaty medallions for us in the Numbered Treaties come to represent something very important for us because, on the other side, you will see the newcomer coming, on this side, and they are shaking hands with this First Nations person.

They are shaking hands. You will see the hatchet that is buried in the ground symbolizing no more war.

Peace between our peoples. You will see the sun; you will see the water; you will see the grass. You will see big teepees, smaller teepees going into the future. You always hear this line that as long as that sun shines, the rivers flow and the grass grows, this treaty will remain in effect for those generations now and for those yet unborn. We say there is a sacredness or a sanctity of agreement with this treaty relationship with the Crown and those two fundamental principles, peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. And we are to share the land and the resource wealth together.

We are to share it. Even in the Numbered Treaties, I do not believe Chief Little Black Bear understood "cede, surrender and relinquish."

[Remarks in Cree.] That is the words in the treaty, but he knows about we are going to share. ***[Remarks in Cree.]***

We will share with our white brothers and sisters, so again back to that principle about peaceful co-existence, mutual respect and to share the bounty of this land and resource together. That is what this treaty relationship is.

It is true that not all First Nations in Canada are treaty First Nations. For example, in British Columbia and in Quebec and in the north, they are not covered by treaties but in many of these areas, First Nations are working with governments on what could be called "modern treaties."

All of our people agree with that relationship embraced in the treaties. It is the essence of our understanding of our relationship with Canada, a relationship that is based on the very positive values of peace between our peoples and mutual respect, and we all are to benefit from the land and resource wealth, embracing a true partnership.

I believe that it is that relationship, the treaty relationship, that we need to re-establish, re-affirm, and implement, but implement the treaty according to the spirit and intent. The courts continue to affirm the First Nations understanding of our treaty rights and our inherent rights, but it is also the best way to move forward, the best way to achieve certainty and prosperity, the best way to achieve real reconciliation. To close an unacceptable gap in the standard of living for many First Nations people in Canada is to embrace that relationship. That gap that people keep talking about, no question: 6 versus 63rd. Do you know what that is?

In 2015, there was a big federal government election coming up. According to the United Nations Human Development Index, Canada was rated 6th for quality of life.

You apply the same indices to First Nations people; we are 63rd. It was 6 versus 63rd. That is what I keep trying to address.

That gap is holding all of us back not only for First Nations people, but all of Canada. It is true that First Nations feel the most severe impacts of that gap from poor housing, contaminated drinking water, tragic epidemic of youth suicides, 1,200+ missing Indigenous women and girls, an overall shortage lifespan other than non-First Nations Canadians, 40,000 children in foster care in provincial care systems and territorial government care systems, too many of our people in jail, a disproportionate number of our people in jails.

That gap needs to be addressed. We know that that gap is the result of more than a century of failed laws and policies imposed on our peoples. Laws and policies imposed on us without our involvement or our agreement—one of them, the Indian Act. It has been around since 1876. I do not want to spend time on the Indian Act, but did you know that we were not allowed to vote until 1961? We were not allowed to leave the reserve without a permit until 1951. We were not allowed to have access to legal counsel, and there are a lot of good lawyers here. How many good lawyers are in the room? Put your hands up. There are lots of good lawyers. If I went and saw you in 1950, I would get thrown in jail. You would be disbarred for giving advice to a treaty Indian, under the Indian Act. It is not good. We still have it.

Another example is the genocide of the residential school system. I do not call it 'cultural genocide'. It is genocide. It fits the United Nations' definition: Forcibly removing children from their families and homes, inflicting harm and pain, suffering abuse. It fits. We still feel the intergenerational traumas of that genocide, so we see it as a flawed system, no question.

There is also the flawed funding approach that has led to decades of underfunding and, of course, all the stolen lands and our stolen children. These policies are dysfunctional and are a barrier to progress for all of us, and they must change. All Canadians feel the impacts of that gap. You feel it through lost productivity, a lower overall GDP growth in Canada, high social costs, high unemployment rates, and under-employment rates, and it is a black mark on our global reputation as a fair and just country.

That is our past. Together we can look to a different future, because I always say let us learn from the past.

Let us not live there, but let us do some truth telling and learn from the past, so that we can have a better future together, one where we can take that lost productivity and unlock the full potential of our peoples and the full potential of this country. That will build a stronger Canada for all of us.

First Nations priorities are Canada's priorities. Acting on First Nations' priorities is not only good for our people, but it is good for all of us because, when we succeed, everybody succeeds. I am pleased to say that in the last four years, we have made some progress. I am always careful when I say this because ***[then I hear]***: "Oh, Bellegarde is a Liberal," or "Oh, Bellegarde is a Conservative," or "Oh, Bellegarde is a Green!" I am not anything, but I am a national advocate for change, a national advocate for policy and legislative change, and we have to work with whomever gets elected. It is my job, so I get along with all the party leaders, every one of them.

In our terms of our work with this federal government over the last four years, over the past four budgeting cycles, every year there is a federal budget. Every fiscal year, what has happened? There has been $21.4 billion pledged for over seven fiscal years for First Nations issues. When is the last time that happened? The answer is never: $21.4 billion. It is a significant and necessary investment, no question, and it is starting to unlock the potential for First Nations peoples in Canada. It starts to address those factors I spoke about a moment ago: lost productivity, high social cost, high unemployment, under-employment, poverty, and the fact that our young people are taking their lives. The investments are way beyond. Remember this thing called the Kelowna Accord, and everybody was jumping up and down: "Kelowna Accord, Kelowna!" in 2005. Well, this is four times the Kelowna Accord, four times the Kelowna Accord.

Now that we see that this $21.4 billion is there, it is a direct result of the advocacy by the AFN and the chiefs and other leaders across Canada. We use that "Closing the Gap" document to educate people and to show the parties that you have got to close the gap. We have this great document, "Closing the Gap" document, in 2015. I was unrolling this document platform, and I was saying we need investments in education, employment, housing, water, infrastructure and youth and all this stuff. All these things I was unrolling in front of this big bunch of reporters, because we are using that "Close the Gap" document to influence the party platforms before the October election in 2015 and really great, rolling it out.

Then, a very astute reporter said, "Chief Bellegarde, do you vote?" I said, "No, I don't vote." Then, he asked, "Well, then how do you expect First Nations people to vote if you, as National Chief, don't vote?" I said, "Good question. Let me get back to you on that." I had to go home and get my mandate to vote for my people, my Elders, my youth, my aunties, my uncles back from Little Black Bear, because, ***[as I was]*** growing up as a little kid, the Elders would say, "Don't vote. That's not our government.

It's not ours. We got a treaty with the Crown. We don't have a treaty with the Liberals or the Conservatives or the Greens. Our treaty is with the Crown, so we do not need to vote for anybody. The Crown has got to live by and an honour this treaty in accordance with the spirit intent."

I was taught that. Then, I was also taught that is not our government. Okay, get it. Do not need to vote.

Did not vote, but 2015 comes along and then, when I go home, and we go through ceremony, get the green light: "Okay, embrace ***[remarks in Cree]***, grandson, this concept of dual citizenship." So, I voted for the very first time.

I was nervous as hell, but I did. Because the National Chief voted, holy smokes, we lit a fire under First Nations people across Canada. Get out to vote, get out to vote.

We have 64% of First Nations people voting now in 2015. That is unprecedented, unheard of. We flipped 22 ridings, so if you want to become government, you had better listen to our issues and priorities or you are not getting our support. That is where it rests.

We have another election coming up now. Now, we are participating, and now we are voting. We have got a left-wing and right-wing as Indian people, First Nations people, too. To our Indian sovereigntists here in the crowd, First Nations sovereigntists, I say, "I do not feel any less Cree for voting. I do not feel any less a member of Little Black Bear for voting." We have got some political power; we exercise it. That individual human right supersedes the collective right of the people now. I am going to keep voting because I have embraced dual citizenship. That is what I feel like, and I feel okay about it. Now, back to the federal government investments, and I call them "investments." They are investments in First Nations children and families. They are investments in human capital, because we are the fastest-growing segment of Canada's population, young First Nations men and women, no question. We are seeing progress. Since November 2015, the number of long-term drinking waters has gone down, no question. I think the latest number is 58 as of March 2019. It is still not done yet, but it is moving. There have been significant new investments in post-secondary education and K-12 education for First Nation students.

There was a big gap there. On reserves, it was $6,500 per child for tuition. Yet, in provincial school systems, it is double that, $12,000–$13,000; in the French school system, almost $20,000—big gap in K-12 education.

Close that gap. Ten thousand students now on the post-secondary student waitlist. We still have work to do regarding K-12 and post-secondary education.

There have also been investments in housing. All these things are moving, but I say it this way: progress does not mean parity. Progress does not mean parity.

With the drinking water advisories, there is still a gap. We still have a higher risk when it comes to water and drinking water.

Some people on the reserves are going to grow up not knowing what it is like to turn on the taps and drink the water just the way it is. We still have that 10,000 student number on the waiting lists. No question, that has to be addressed. With respect to housing, more than one-quarter of status Indians live in a house that needs major repairs, and more than one-third of our people live in an over-crowded house. Think of Cat Lake. Did you guys see that a few months back or a few weeks back? Overcrowded housing, sickness, overcrowded housing, problems with that.

This is not good for anybody's mental, physical health. Just think of how hard it is for a young person to go to school and excel in school while living in an overcrowded house contaminated with black mold and everything else. We have got a lot more work to do. There is progress, but our goal must be to maintain momentum and keep moving forward in a positive way. Now, October is coming.

Closing this gap and moving forward requires we work with, and when necessary—we always have to push our treaty partners.

That is the Crown. Now, it is the federal government on behalf of the Crown, we get that. I have already mentioned the investments that are needed. Funding is very important, no question, but we have been underfunded for so long, that it is difficult to get out of poverty. We need those basic resources, no question.

We are going to keep pushing for that, but it is not only about funding and financing. We have got to move the right way. We have got to see a more growing self-sufficiency for First Nations, healthy people living in healthy communities with strong governments who can plan strategically and be full participants in the economy. That, of course, benefits all of us. We need our action, our rights, our rights to maintain our identities and our rights to make a decision that affect our lives. I call it this way, the right to self-determination. Canada will only achieve reconciliation by recognizing and honouring First Nations' rights, title and jurisdiction.

Briefly, June is coming, the end of June. That means this current government is going to be done. I ask me, myself, and all the AFN staff, chiefs, everybody, "What are we going to get done by the end of June? What are we focusing on?" There are three pieces of legislation we want to see passed before the end of June, before the House rises, and it is critical to our agenda. First is Bill C-92. That bill is about First Nations taking responsibility for First Nations child welfare. Remember I said there are 40,000 kids in foster care, provincial and territorial care. Bill C-91 is the other one, the Indigenous Languages Act. Then, there is Bill C-262. It is a private member's bill to give life to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Those are the three pieces of legislation. I have got a three-day meeting coming up in July with the chiefs of Canada in Fredericton, New Brunswick: July 23, 24, 25. I want it to be a happy gathering. It will be happy if we get these three bills passed.

I want to tell you why these three bills are important and why they all deserve your support. Concerning child welfare, Bill C-92, the formal name of that act, is An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families. It is aimed at dealing with the massive and tragic over-representation of children in the child welfare system. Every day, our children are taken from their families and placed in government care. All too often, it is because of poverty. It is not simply about bad parents. Where that is the case, absolutely.

We do not want our children in unsafe environments, but we want an approach that, as much as possible, keeps children with their families, their extended families, in their communities, in their nations and tribes.

Decades of underfunding and apprehension is harming our children and families. You might have heard the latest statistic that there are more First Nations children in state care right now than at the height of the residential school system. That is brutally bad.

I say to Canada, we can do better; we must do better. This legislation is an important piece of the more comprehensive reform that is needed across the system. It is about putting the responsibility for First Nations children back where it rightfully belongs, with First Nations. The goal is to apply First Nations laws, policies and values to systems designed and implemented by First Nations people. I have always said, "Occupy the field, Chiefs." If you do not want federal law and provincial law to apply, create your own laws and exert your jurisdiction and occupy that space.

In some places, these systems exist, and they are working. In other places, the bill supports First Nations in building their systems to keep the circle of community strong and to protect the young people. Bill C-92 represents a new chapter and a new approach for children and families.

It places a bigger focus on prevention over apprehension. It says clearly that, wherever possible, children must stay at home or in their community with their parents and their relatives, so they are close to all of their loved ones.

This legislation is about First Nations taking care of First Nations children. I know many of you are parents.

We would all insist on the right to look after and care for our own children. Bill C-92 is about our authority and responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing of our children.

It is about recognizing First Nations jurisdiction over child welfare. We need to get it done. Now, the Indigenous Languages Act, Bill C-91. It is a response to calls over many years by First Nations for action to save and strengthen Indigenous languages. Respecting and restoring our languages is a fundamental step in reconciliation. I have said it this way: The Crown has an obligation, a duty to expend just as many resources to rebuild, rejuvenate, bring back our

Indigenous languages as they spend on trying to eradicate and kill them by the residential school system. They have got an obligation to do that. Language is so important to maintaining a culture and culture identity as peoples.

These languages are the original languages of these lands. They are found nowhere else other than our territories on Turtle Island.

I said they are, indeed, national treasures. Our traditional knowledge and our world views are founded in our languages. They are key to our identity. We know they are key to our own health and wellbeing.

For First Nations, language is life, and it is why I pushed for an Indigenous Languages Act as a priority, one that should be co-developed with us. I am pleased that the government responded favourably to that regard. The act has received support from all parties, and we even know from polling, that the majority of Canadians, 74% of Canadians support the Indigenous Languages Act. We want it to become law before parliament rises this summer, so I am asking for all your help and support. Connect to your member of parliament, even any senator you know and ask them to support this, and get it done. And 2019 is the International Year of Indigenous Languages. There is no better way for Canada to mark this year than to pass this bill. It has been co-developed with us to preserve, promote and revitalize Indigenous languages. I have said it this way: Fluency is important. Fluency. I do not need to see Cree on a box of Corn Flakes. You have got English and French there, fine.

I need to see and hear how we say, all the 60+ languages, all of them still spoken. How the old people say it.

We need to hear and listen; the old people, our grandmothers and grandfathers whispering the stories, their creation stories to the ears of their little ones. We need fluency. That is what it is about. As I said before, this is not only good for us, it is good for Canada because studies have shown when young First Nations people are fluent in their language, they know who they are, where they come from.

They are more successful in school, and they are therefore, more successful in life. Even this languages act is an investment in human capital. You will see graduation rates go up and employment increase. It is good. Our young people deserve the same opportunity as other young people in Canada. They deserve that chance to dream and achieve their dreams.

The other piece of legislation is Bill C-262. It is a private member's bill in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We have said it before that the UN Declaration is nothing less than our roadmap to reconciliation and its full implementation is crucial to the proper recognition of First Nations' fundamental human rights not only here in Canada, not only regionally, nationally, but internationally. Canada is committed to fully implement the UN Declaration. Bill C-262 is necessary to fulfill that promise.

I know there is some fear mongering about the UN Declaration, especially the concept about 'free, prior and informed consent', or the free, prior and informed consent over activities that affect our peoples, lands, our territories and our waters and our rights. People do not need to fear this concept of 'free, prior and informed consent." Some call it a veto, but the word veto does not appear anywhere in the UN Declaration. It is actually a way forward, and it is the right way forward. 'Free, prior and informed consent' I say even does better than 'duty to consult and accommodate'. This will not create any uncertainty over resource development projects. It is indeed quite the opposite—uncertainties created when governments and industry ignore First Nation rights and title. That is exactly what leads to uncertainty. It also leads to conflict, and it also leads to blockades, and it also leads to court cases if you do not respect rights, title and jurisdiction. 'Free, prior and informed consent' I say would ensure that governments and industry and business and First Nations are on board and on side before any development begins if they sit down and talk.

Think about this concept about 'free, prior and informed consent' in a simple way or phrase I always use: If you are the federal government, provincial governments—any government or industry—before you try to build anything, ensure that you built the respectful relationship with First Nations people. It is really as simple as that. It is as straightforward as that. Do not build anything or even try to build anything until you have that respectful relationship. That is the best way forward. We want to see Bill C-262 passed.

Again, I am going to ask you all for your support. Now, October is coming; a big federal election is coming.

The writ will be dropped some time. What is on the party platforms? What do First Nations want to see? Boy, there is a range. We know the countdown is underway.

I said there are certain critical priorities that we need to see. There is an opportunity to make history and set an agenda for real change and reconciliation in this country.

We say our agenda extends well beyond a single parliament or one government. Our agenda has been supported by all parties on certain issues. Our path to growing self-sufficiency, to healthy people living in healthy homes and communities is the work of our lifetimes and a legacy we owe to our people and to those seven generations yet to come after us. It took us all more than a century to create these challenges. Now, we need to work together to change our common future. Our Assembly of First Nations will continue to push for an agenda to make progress and continue to walk the paths forward for First Nations and Canada together. Yes, there is an election coming in October. My job as National Chief is to try to influence the national agenda, to influence all party platforms, so we have been working on a new document. I do not want to call it "Closing the Gap 2." I do not know if we will call it "Pathway to Prosperity." I do not know if we are going to call it "Maintaining Momentum," but it is going to be something, and we will be releasing our priorities soon in that document.

I can tell you, today, that the overarching goal of our agenda will be redefining the relationship with First Nations and Canada.

It really is about moving beyond the Indian Act, which has been in place since 1876, and into real recognition of First Nations governments, including our long-standing treaty relationships with the Crown. Let us get our treaty honoured and implemented in accordance with the spirit and intent. Let us find ways to move beyond the Indian Act, standing up as nations. Our leaders have been pushed, and we have pushed way beyond certain aspects within the Indian Act. Some are already moving beyond it.

Others are ready to do so. This Indian Act controls our lives and gives the Government of Canada power to make decisions for us. That is not self-determination. Our new agenda will set out our commitments to our traditional duties and responsibilities as stewards of the lands and waters with a view of seven generations from now. This has to be the number one priority not only for Canada, but for the world. We have got to be leaders. We have to know, feel and see that all the policies and plans to transition from our dependency on fossil fuels to clean energy is there, and it has got to be clear. We have no choice but to meet the Paris targets and ensure that the earth does not warm up more than 2°C. We have got to make sure that it does not warm more than 1.5°C. Do you see what is going on in the world?

Big winds, big fires, floods, more icebergs. This is not just a Canadian issue; this is a global issue. We must maintain and enhance the world's biodiversity. Some of the most biodiverse-rich regions of the world remain in our territories here, in Canada. We have to draw upon our peoples' ancient knowledge as together we find ourselves within our natural world. What I am talking about, as you know, is climate change, greenhouse gas emissions. Our worldview is this: When I gave the greeting, all my relatives, when we say we are not really racist as Indians or First Nations people, we do not see colour. When we go to the Assembly, we acknowledge that, this is our world view in 30 seconds; we acknowledge the Creator. Then, we acknowledge those beings that sit one in the east, in the south, the west and north. They all have roles and functions.

We acknowledge mother earth for everything she does for us every day; father sky; grandmother moon; grandfather sun; our relatives; the star people. We acknowledge our relatives, the four-legged ones. We acknowledge the ones that fly, the ones that swim, the ones that crawl.

We acknowledge the male plants and the female plants, and then we will acknowledge those four grandmother spirits that look after the waters, rainwater, freshwater, saltwater and then, you are so powerful, as women, because when life comes, what happens?

Water breaks. That is our family. We are all part of that. We are the two-leggeds. I do not care if you are black, white, pink, polka dot; we are the two-leggeds. We fit into that worldview. If we can get that worldview taught and educated in the private sector and in the public sectors, not only in Canada, but throughout the world, we might have a chance of keeping the degrees down, because we are part of that. Whatever befalls our relatives in any of that thing that

I just described will eventually befall us as two-leggeds.

That is not acceptable. We need to move, and we need to use our Elders' knowledge, our traditional knowledge, to get this educated and taught, not only domestically but internationally. I also want to say that in our new agenda are innovative ways to spark economic prosperity. I always say you cannot talk self-determination, self-government, unless you really talk about economic self-sufficiency as well, which means unlocking the full potential of our young and blooming population. Canada does have an aging workforce. We have to unlock the potential of our lands and traditional territories in ways that are responsible and sustainable. Even for economic development—there is a lot of economic development people in the room—what are the basic four, five things we say? Greater access to capital is needed. You have got to have better access to capital and know how to raise money, how to raise funds. There needs to be more effective procurement policies, locally, regionally, nationally. Procurement is a big issue. Even provincial policy changes, and I have said this before to the premiers. I am going to go to the COF, the Council of the Federation, where all the premiers are meeting. This is one simple policy change that could happen. I have asked them to do this:

If you are the provincial government, I have said to them, think of this policy change as a government that before you issue a license or a permit to any industry operating on your provincial government boundaries in any sector, whether it be forestry, mining, tourism, whatever, that that company must demonstrate that they have got a strategic plan when it comes to First Nations engagement, when it comes to procurement and, perhaps a workforce strategy, benefit sharing, members on their board, all of the above. If that company does not have a strategy or plan, you, as a government, do not issue them a license or permit. Boom. You will watch a lot of partnerships develop.

The policy change is another piece for economic development and prosperity. Federal government, speed up the comprehensive and specific lands claim process. It is good for the economy, really good. It is slow. If you do all those things, you will set out the agenda to create stronger and safer First Nations communities, a stronger economic base for all of us.

We are going to keep pushing for better housing, better infrastructure; it will all be stronger and safer through restorative justice systems and new approaches to police and community safety. We want to make sure that all women, First Nations women, girls, boys and men, two-spirit and transgender are free from violence.

When I talk about the justice system, everybody is going to remember two big names: Colten Boushie and Jon Styres. We say this punitive justice system has got to go, and we need to look at restorative justice systems. It is about having our laws recognized and being as equally important as common law and civil law. Canada is a big enough country; it is a progressive enough country to have other laws and systems recognized in addition to common law and civil law. That is about looking at a really comprehensive restorative justice process. Finally, we need to see continued investments in housing, water and sewer infrastructure and education as well as health care. It is a given that we will push for those things. It is no question. To conclude, today, I want to make it clear that our agenda is not simply a federal government agenda; it is a national agenda. Every government, every citizen has a role to play in reconciliation in closing this gap.

There is a great deal all of you in this room can do in supporting our agenda and being agents of understanding and change. Even by you simply being here today tells me you have an interest in our work, in finding our path forward.

I thank you for listening with open hearts and open minds. I am always open to discussing ways we can work together to shape a future and a country that we all can be proud of. First Nations will continue to push forward for our children and our families. I know we can move forward faster when we move together. It is time to keep up the momentum to ensure we see results on the ground, in our homes and in our nations as our agenda is Canada's agenda.

When First Nations succeed, Canada succeeds. I want to say something and acknowledge a very important young man. Marcus Cooney, are you here, Marcus?

Marcus, stand up. This young man is 12 years old.

He has got a birthday coming up. He is 11; he is going to be 12 on May 25th, right? He is 12 years old. He is on his reconciliation journey. He is on his education journey.

He wanted to be here. It is these young men and women that are going to help create change, so I wanted to acknowledge you and thank you, because he is the one that is going to be challenging his mom and dad around the dinner table, his grandparents around that dinner table about what reconciliation looks like, what treaties look like, and about how we can work together to build a better country and more respect for First Nations people. He is here listening. I want to say a big thank you Marcus for doing that.

You are awesome. Keep it up. Thanks for listening, everybody. Thank you so much.

KJ: Thank you so much National Chief Bellegarde.

We are conscious of people's time, but the National Chief did kindly agree to take a couple of questions.

PB: If there are any questions. I am conscious of your time.

KJ: There is a lot of interest. You mentioned that at the end of your speech that, ultimately, everybody here is interested in having a dialogue and a discussion.

I did not mention this before, but it is a sold-out event. That, right there, in terms of the Empire Club of Canada, tells me there has got to be a few questions out there.

Q: **Good afternoon. I believe, just like the Queen, you also have a duty to the un-ceded, un-surrendered Métis. I would like to invite you to close the gap with us. We would also like to be represented and be a part of the Native Indians across the country. Thank you.**

PB: Thanks for that comment. I just wanted my paper, so I can make notes. Again, in Canada's Constitution, First Nations, Métis and Inuit are recognized in s. 35. Even back home in Treaty 4 Territory, our old people used to say when John A. Macdonald was the Prime Minister of Canada, he put in place a treaty-making process, and he put the Treaty Commissioner in place.

The Treaty Commissioner came out to meet with our chiefs, with Poundmaker, Little Black Bear, all of the chiefs. Our chiefs were concerned about their Métis brothers and sisters and relatives. In Treaty 4, the chiefs asked Alexander Morris, Treaty Commissioner, "What about our Métis relatives, our brothers and sisters?" The chiefs were concerned about our relatives.

Alexander Morris said this: "We'll make Treaty with you first, as First Nations people, and we'll come back; the Crown will come back. We have to work together to push the Crown to come back for your peoples." I can only go by those teachings because you are also recognized in Canada's Constitution and there is a different relationship in some regards, but I know our relatives back home—and this is true. What I said is true, the teaching about trying to push the Crown to come back and deal with your issues. However, we can work together; we work together. Maybe one day maybe the Métis will have one vote for the National Chief, too, and then I will really be concerned about the Métis issues. That is a good point.

Q: I want to first thank you, National Chief, for your words today. They were inspiring. A fabulous job, as always. You always speak from the heart, so we really appreciate that. On behalf of the women in Ontario, we want to ask, after 50 years of discrimination under the Indian Act against Indigenous women and their descendants, if the AFN will stand with us to push this government to remove the final discrimination before they break for the summer?

PB: Yes. We are on the same page. Just so the audience knows, under the Indian Act, there was a really discriminatory system against First Nations women.

Under the Indian Act, prior to 1985, a First Nation woman marrying a non-First Nations man, would lose status. Yet, if I married a non-Indian person, she gains that. If I married you in 1984, she would be a Treaty Indian. There was a discriminatory piece within the Indian Act. There is Bill S-3; it is the Descheneaux case. We are saying we support it all the way back to 1876, to the first Indian Act to end discrimination against First Nations women, because of that. We support that. We will stand with you. We have chiefs' resolutions, so there is no question; we have got to end discrimination all the way back to 1876. The answer is yes.

Q: Ziggy Krupa. Hello, Chief Perry. Thank you very much. I want to share a little story with you.

My younger daughter decided to go to the University of Ottawa. We had a family discussion as to her career path. She said she is taking Indigenous studies. I was taken aback about it, but said, okay. I had to pause for a minute and think about it, but then quickly realized that this is how change starts. It has got to start with somebody, and I am very proud of my daughter for making that choice. What are some of the opportunities for somebody like my daughter, going forward?

PB: Good question. We encourage everyone to go out and listen and learn, get educated. There are opportunities at the band level, the reserve level, tribal council level, provincial territorial organization level, even at the AFN level. We are always looking for good people for research, writers, policy analysts, to come help and join the teams. There are opportunities like that.

There are summer student programs at each of those levels as well. She has got to learn how to knock on the door and build a relationship and ask people to go for coffee first, go for lunch first. That is how you get your foot in the door, and I would encourage that to happen.

Q: Bonjour.

My name is Randall Becker. I am the traditional Council Chief of the Teme Augama Anishnabai in Temagami. I am also the CEO of Gamet Gold Corp. and the owner of Nimkie Mining Services Corp. When we talk about moving forward—and really, sovereignty, I believe, I agree with you, is economic development, successful economic development—the underlying issues I see is that the building codes on the reserves are not up to the standards sometimes of everybody else. Also, the workplace safety laws on the reserve are different. That should not be. You can go to a reserve and start putting on shingles with running shoes and a ball cap, but if you tried that in downtown Toronto, there would be tickets for everybody all the way around. I think that is an underlying problem with our people, too, is that the colleges are training for profit, so the classes are too big; they are not getting the courses they need; they are just getting rubber-stamped and thrown out the door; and they do not have the knowledge they need to be successful in mining or construction or anything. It is a

for-profit thing that this funding is going into.

I would like to also see change on the reserve where our safety standards are on par with Canada and our building codes are on par with Canada. All through the far north and all through the reserves, if you installed a central sewer and water system the way they are allowed to on the reserves, there would not be clean drinking water anywhere in this country. I would like to ask you if you could lobby for that, too, as well.

[Remarks in Indigenous language.]

PB: Thanks, Randall.

Yes, that is a whole big thing. Building codes on the reserves, safety laws on the reserve, the standards are different. I grew up on the rez and we did not have running water, had to haul water in the wintertime, melt it on the wood stove, and I used to be perplexed as a little five-year-old kid hauling in snow, a big stack of snow, about how, after it melts, you only get a little bit of water. I had to keep doing that. I went to school off the reserve, grade one. I did not know how to flush a toilet, because we never had flush toilets. That is how we grew up. The issue of my long introduction here is that even when we got water—plumbing and sewer—it was not installed properly.

It would always freeze up in the winter, so we always had to maintain the outhouse summer and winter, because the standards were not the same. When I say when we have to occupy the field as First Nations people, in different laws, in different areas, in different jurisdictions, in different policies, I mean they have got to be as good as and/or better than provincial law or federal-provincial law or federal laws. If we occupied a field at Little Black Bear and have our own safety code, it is going to be better than the Building Code of Canada. If we occupied a field in any jurisdiction, it has to be better. Then, we have to have the capacity to enforce and implement that code. That is what we need to keep doing, so we have better services, better infrastructure comparable to everybody else, because right now there is not one. It varies, because each of those 634 reserves is a separate jurisdiction. Each of those 634 First Nations are at different levels about capacity. Some can do that. Others have a long way to go. The answer is yes, we can help lobby for that, and the answer is to the chiefs and councils and the people watching and listening, occupy the field, but you have to make sure that you also have the capacity to enforce that law. It has got to be just as good as and/or better than provincial and federal law—for building codes, all of those things, the safety pieces and law, but we have got to keep pushing for that to happen. Those are my comments.

KJ: Thank you very much.

PB: All right. Thanks, guys.

KJ: I am pleased to welcome Mike Martelli from Ontario Power Generation to the podium to thank National Chief Bellegarde.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Mike Martelli, President, Renewable Generation, Ontario Power Generation

Thank you, Kelly. Good afternoon. Thank you Chief Bellegarde for those inspiring words. Your words gave us pause to reflect, and I know everyone in this room will take your call to action to heart. Personally, I will strive to listen with empathy and do everything I can to support our First Nations partners.

It is particularly important to me, because OPG has held a special relationship with Indigenous peoples of Ontario for a very long time. Since our inception as a company 20 years ago, Indigenous policy has been a vital part of our identity. The policy has evolved as our business has evolved, but one thing has remained constant:

We want to build and grow lasting, impactful and respectful relationships with Indigenous communities near our current and future operations.

I am proud of the progress that we have made developing several commercial partnerships for clean energy projects with First Nations communities. The legacy of these partnerships beyond the decades of clean power is a lasting economic benefit, and it means opportunities for skilled workers.

Through these projects, our First Nations partners receive a long-term revenue stream that helps grow strong communities, strong communities that can share their culture and continue their traditions. This is something that matters a great deal to OPG and to all of Canada.

As Chief Bellegarde previously said, “We focus on bringing back Indigenous languages, ceremonies, cultures and traditions, all that was lost over the past 150 years.

This is how we will generate hope for all Canadian people.” With these words in mind, we will strive to do much more.

We will strengthen our bonds through openness and trust; we will look to build more mutual beneficial partnerships; and we will continue to listen and serve while respecting the traditional territories and culture of the province’s First Nations. Thank you. Miigwetch.

Concluding Remarks, by Ms. Jackson

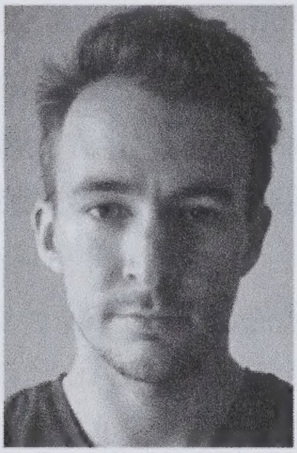
Thank you. Our event is coming to a close, and we look forward to welcoming you at some of our upcoming events. Tonight, we have an evening event focused on "Canada's Fresh Political Voices."

On June 10th, we are hosting a very special "Power in Politics" event featuring Vassy Kapelos. On June 13th, we will have a panel discussion entitled "The Rise of White Nationalism in Canada."

That day, as well, in the evening, we will have an event featuring the Honourable Mary Ng: "Women Who Build."This meeting is now adjourned.

Thank you for attending.

The Empire Club Presents



CANADA'S FRESH POLITICAL VOICES: A FEDERAL ELECTION PANEL FEATURING NEW INFLUENCERS

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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May 22, 2019

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, members and guests. Welcome to the 115th season of the Empire Club of Canada. My name is Kent Emerson. I am the President of the Empire Club of Canada and your host for this evening featuring "Canada's Fresh Political Voices," the first in our federal election series. I would like to begin by offering thanks to our generous sponsor for this evening, Navigator.

Thanks, Navigator for sponsoring this, and also to the National Post and Toronto Sun, as our media partners, and also to mediaevents.ca for webcasting today's event.

Without great sponsors like these, these events could not happen. We are also proud for a few special guests tonight. I know that the Ryerson Leadership Lab has sent some people out tonight. I know there are four or five. Why don't you stand up? A round of applause for some students here that have come out tonight. I know that there are some Empire Club board members here. I am going to introduce Mike in a minute, but I see Antoinette here; I see Ziggy here. Anybody else tonight? Thank you guys for coming.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Jeff Ballingall, Creator, Ontario Proud, BC Proud, and Canada Proud; Founder, Mobilize Media Group

Ms. Adrienne Batra, Editor-in-Chief, Toronto Sun

Ms. Jasmine Pickel, Interim Ontario Communications Director, Canadian Taxpayers Federation

Taylor Scollon, Co-Founder, North99

Mr. Rick Smith, Executive Director, Broadbent Institute

I just want to take a little bit of time to talk about our evening event series. It is something that started a couple of years ago by Paul Fogolin, who was the president then.

It has grown in popularity, grown in concept, and the whole idea here is we come out; we have a few drinks and eat a bit of food. Then, we do a presentation, and we have some fun. It is a little more off the cuff than our lunches that are more traditional for our audience. Then, we have some more drinks, and we have some more food, so do not go anywhere when this is over. No one is kicking you out.

It is a networking event on purpose. You can tell the nanny or whoever is at home, "I am staying out; we are having fun with the Empire Club."

We have some more great events this season. I will mention them at the end of the evening. I also thought it would be appropriate to introduce Mike Van Soelen tonight to explain, first of all, why we have gathered here, the purpose of this event. There are two reasons. One is that Mike has organized this event. The second is Mike is nominated as President for the next season of the Empire Club, which begins in September. Provided the board members here do not vote against the committee's recommendation, because there is always this matter of democracy, which gets in the way of things, then Mike will be the next president.

I am sure many of you know him. You know him from journalism. You may know him from politics. Maybe you know him from his life in public relations or his opinions on TV and radio, which I strongly disagree with. I just wanted to mention. I think this is a good time to bring it up.

I have gotten to know Mike over the year. What I can say about him is he is a really great guy, and he is thoughtful in the way he puts ideas together. Putting this event together is one of those examples of that.

I am really looking forward to Mike in succeeding me in all kinds of different ways. Please, welcome the Third Vice President of the Empire Club of Canada and Managing Principal at Navigator, the next president of the Empire Club, Mike Van Soelen.

Introduction, by Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Thanks, Kent for the very kind words. It will be exciting and a little nervous to follow in Kent's footsteps. He has been a fabulous president of the Empire Club. Thanks, again, for the kind words. Good evening, everybody. I see a lot of familiar faces here. That is exciting for us. I know it is going to be a great event. We are here to talk about a pretty important issue, but I was going to begin by talking about something else that I think is important, and that is the Game of Thrones finale from earlier this week. I assume you guys are all caught up on the finale, and it certainly seems as though everyone has watched it. It is the talk of the office. We hear it on social media. Certainly, barrels of ink have been spilled talking about whether the finale stacked up or it did not.

It seems to have been a cultural moment, I suppose, for a generation. Actually, the Game of Thrones only achieved 19 million viewers. That might sound like a lot, but it is really not. That tells us an important fact about the fragmentation of media today. I think it tells us it is an important context for the discussion that we are about to have this evening.

I would like to myth-bust about the Game of Thrones a little bit, in part, because I am not one of those people who has ever seen an episode of Game of Thrones, which Adrienne has bugged me about before. I know the HBO executives were happy with it. We heard about that.

I think the fact that they marked it as a success sort of speaks to how hard it is to engage and get eyeballs today versus how it used to be. When you consider 15 years ago Friends and its season finale, you will find that the Game of Thrones got only a third of the eyeballs that Friends did 15 years ago.

Then, they only got 87 million less than M*A*S*H did 35 years ago. M*A*S*H's season finale was the high-water mark. No one has ever surpassed it as far as the number of eyeballs that there were. Of course, they achieved that number in a pool of people that was much smaller than what there is today. I expect, at the time M*A*S*H's finale was out there, it felt like everybody had seen the show, but the fact was that then, everybody did see the show, unlike with the Game of Thrones, where we live in a different world. Tonight's panel is about politics. It is about the way political conversations are going to unfold in the next federal election. I make the point about Game of Thrones because, just like the entertainment industry has changed, the news industry is changing as well.

People are getting their information from evermore diverse sources. Politicians cannot count on Canadians all tuning in to CBC, The National, each evening, to get information about the day's events and the day's activities in Ottawa.

Of course, this has huge implications for political parties. It has huge implications for elections and, in some ways, it has implications for the workings of democracy itself.

In all that change, there is also opportunity. I think it is that opportunity that tonight's panel can speak most succinctly to. If there is a common theme among their panelists, it is that they are all pioneers in navigating these fragmented audiences, the different tribes, and in using different platforms and tools to engage and reach Canadians across the country. Let us get to our panel and get the discussion started. I want to start by introducing the folks here.

First, we have, on the far left, Jeff Ballingall, a good friend, creator of Ontario Proud, BC Proud and Canada Proud as well. He is producing some of the fastest-growing and most engaged content in the country today. He is the owner, importantly, of Mobilize Media Group, and he is doing great work. Sitting to his right is Taylor Scollon.

He is the co-founder of North99, a progressive, independent advocacy group that reaches of millions of folks. Next, we have Jasmine Pickel, who joins us form the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

She is the Interim Ontario Communications Director. The CTF has long been a force in Canadian politics, a savvy group that understands how to engage with Canadians. I am very pleased that she can join us tonight.

Next, we have Rick Smith, author, friend, nonprofit leader. He is the Executive Director of the Broadbent Institute, and he has overseen the organization's push in new media with PressProgress.

Rick also knows me as long as anyone in this room, and he can remember the days when I had long hair and was beating around doing my undergrad.

Also, a super-smart guy. He did really important work around plastics and BPA. I think we all owe him gratitude for that advocacy work.

Finally, our distinguished moderator, a good friend, Adrienne Batra, at one time Director of Communications to Rob Ford, is Editor-in-Chief of the Toronto Sun. The queen of all media, the incomparable, Adrienne Batra, let me turn it over to you.

Panel Discussion: Canada's Fresh Political Voices, Moderated by Ms. Adrienne Batra

AB: Good evening to all of you. I realize that we are here after a long weekend, and it is kind of terrible weather outside. Being away from your family and then having a long day at work is perhaps not necessarily the place you want to be as out and about. We promise to engage you, invigorate you and, hopefully, give you a few things to walk away with, a little bit of food for thought. Welcome, and thank you to the Empire Club for hosting this event here. A special welcome to our friends Rick and Taylor and to the Albany Club.

Maybe you will find the sacrificial rooms upstairs. I cannot imagine that you are in this club very often, but, welcome, nonetheless. Irony was not lost on me. Jeff Ballingall is sitting to my left. This is an important conversation that we are having in this country and on this stage this evening in front of all of you.

If anybody knows about being disrupted in the media industry, it is I, in the newspaper business. We are sitting with four individuals here who are prepared and have been engaged in disrupting in a sort of political establishment in their own way. With all of that and in that context, they come from different sort of political ideologies and philosophies, even though none of them directly belong to a political party. We will dive into that right away. I am going to start on my left with you, Mr. Ballingall. Please, for any of the panelists, feel free to jump in. Just a housekeeping note: Ladies and gentlemen, we will take questions from you, if time remains, so just jot something down. I believe someone will pick up a note from you.

If you have a question you would like to ask to the panelists, I will endeavour to get it to you. If you want to follow us along on social media, it is #empireclub.

Very easy. It is right there.Jeff Ballingall, I used the term 'disrupter' when I first started talking about all four of you. Do you view yourself as a disrupter in terms of a media company, social media, partisan, political? How do you view what Ontario Proud has done, and, now, ultimately, going into a federal election, what Canada Proud will do?

JB: I certainly think we do. Our work is certainly disrupting a lot of people, a lot of mainstream political parties, a lot of mainstream politicians, mainstream publications. People are hungry for something new and different. Finally, because of social media, we are able to do and say things that others cannot, not just in our tone of content, but in our ability to just get our message out. Twenty years ago, 30 years ago, if you wanted to reach millions of people, you had to have a printing press or TV station. When I started Ontario Proud, I started it with no money. I started it with memes and links and jokes and videos, and, suddenly, because we are talking about an issue that really resonated at the time, which was hydro prices in this province, our message grew like wildfire. Things are changing every day with Facebook's algorithm.

It is harder and harder to start something new. I was lucky. I did it at a time where you had that ability, but we are doing something that is different. We are reaching a ton of people in a time where traditional media is declining, if not collapsing. Our message works because it resonates. People like what we are doing.

Some people really hate it, but enough people really like it that it works. I feel like what we are doing is very disruptive, and we are going to be continuing to do so.

AB: Taylor, North99, the organization that you are with is described as a not-for-profit, progressive-content and opinion organization with the goal of shifting public opinion and making Canada a more fair and inclusive country. You are non-partisan, and you do not endorse political parties, per se. However, you do have a particular political side of the spectrum that you intend to support. I want to pose a similar question to you.

As an advocacy organization, how have you viewed the traditional media? But going into this, and part of the premise of why we are here is that we are going into the next federal election. How do you anticipate your organization injecting itself and still maintaining the core values and principles that you have?

TS: Our mission is really to shift opinion in a progressive direction. Like you said, we are a broadly progressive organization. The way I describe it to people is that our goal is to expand the boundaries on the left of what is politically viable and politically possible. We do that in a variety of ways, many of which Jeff also does with his Proud network pages, and in other ways, too, by doing polling that talks about issues that people are not necessarily discussing in the discourse. We did, I think, the first poll in Canada on the Green New Deal, for example. Now, that is something that is being talked about more and more. I think we have a role to play in expanding the boundaries of what the political parties can talk about because we can say things and do things that they are not able to yet.

AB: Jasmine, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation has been around for a very long time. It is an organization that I am quite familiar with, having been the former Manitoba director. One of the things that has always knocked against the CTF is that you are just ostensibly a shell and an arm for the Conservative Party and any rightwing political party. I would always counter that by saying, "No, we are equal opportunity flamethrowers; it does not matter who is in power," and I like to say that about the Toronto Sun, too, sometimes.

I want to ask you: I know that you are new in this role as the Ontario director, but you now have some colleagues that are in the same space you are in now.

The CTF is infamous; we have all seen it, the debt clock that goes around across the country or around the province. How have you found the impact that your organization has made in either changing government policy or, frankly, changing a government?

JP: The CTF has been extremely impactful. I think, in election campaigns, we tend to get swept away with these grandiose ideas that sound wonderful, in theory, but no one can afford. As you mentioned, I am the Ontario director, so that involves specifically holding Doug Ford to account. This was a government that came in saying that there was respect for taxpayers and, yet, we see that the budget in Ontario is not going to be balanced until after the end of his mandate.

Very convenient. Likewise, we are the largest sub-national debtor. There is a lot of work to be done. I would say that the CTF is the voice of reason, really, in an election campaign. Our debt clock really does bring that conversation of just what is reasonable, what can we afford, back into the conversation before we all get swept away with all different political promises.

AB: Rick, my question is going to be very similar to you with the Broadbent Institute. Notice how we did this left, right, left, right. We planned it that way. Yes, it was a little bit planned that way. The Broadbent Institute not only engages in the political discourse, but you actively go out, and you commission studies and reports and research to buttress the policies that you would like governments to implement and employ.

Of course, Ed Broadbent was well known on what would be the left side of the political spectrum, but this is, again, an opportunity in this conversation that we are having right now, for your organization to be part of significant change. How do you see your role versus, say Jeff Ballingall's role, for example?

RS: We are right, and Jeff is wrong, for starters. If I can just take a second, I just wanted to thank you very much. I turned fifty last year, and you have deemed us the 'fresh political voices' here. I just wanted to thank the Empire Club very much, because I tell my kids all the time that I am not that old.

AB: Fifty is the new thirty.

RS: The Empire Club has now confirmed that for my children, so I really appreciate that. We do a few things at the Broadbent Institute. We really do three things. We try to pump out good policy ideas, both proactively and reactively, trying to go toe-to-toe with dumb Conservative ideas. We do a lot of training of up-and-coming leaders across the country, and then we run

PressProgress as an online daily newsroom. It is a little newsroom. It has a morning meeting every day.

We try to pump out good news stories. More than anything, we are in the ideas business. Like a lot of folks on this stage, we have a different role to play in the political process. We are not really interested so much in the news cycle of the moment. We try to take a longer view and try to make sure our ideas gain traction over the longer term.

AB: Why not just be a part of the NDP? Why not just be part of a political party? Same question to all of you, actually, but I will let you go first, Rick.

RS: We have a different role to play. We are in the ideas business as opposed to the getting-people-elected business. I think there is a real need for that. Frankly, we were set up seven years ago. As Canadian progressives, we came late to the game. There is a long tradition of cross-issue, progressive policy organizations in the U.S., not so much in Canada. The conservative movement, to its credit, really got ahead of us.

The Fraser Institute, founded in the 1970s—the Manning Centre. We are, of course the Fraser Institute for good, not evil. We were late to the game, but we have been trying to catch up. We can go toe-to-toe with conservatives and conservative-movement organizations in a way that the political parties cannot and engage in that daily combat of ideas in a way that political parties cannot.

AB: Jeff, our friend Rick here has taken a lot of shots at the centre-right, the conservative movement. I think you would be, arguably, the most representative in terms of an organization that is helping the conservative movement through the things that you are doing. Do you find, though, that you are piercing through versus what the extreme left at the Ed Broadbent Institute is doing?

JB: I think so. I think a lot of people are in a Toronto-centric, Ottawa-centric bubble, and when I try to talk about politics, I always try to talk about politics in a way that my aunt would understand, so ***[I use language that is]*** simplified, accessible, digestible, relevant, relatable.

We try to mix up our tone, too. We do not just want to be angry. We do not just want to be shocked. We do not want to be just disgusted. We try to use humour.

We do not want to be just the drunk uncle at the dinner table. We talk about a litany of issues beyond just politics and try to inject culture. We want to bring in people into the conversation and then try to influence their opinion on Justin Trudeau or, in the past, Kathleen Wynne, in different ways. We are always testing what works and what does not. The beauty of social media is that it is an instant focus group. You know instantly what works and instantly what does not.

That is the sort of thing that we are doing. We have to keep really abreast of what is going on with the tech giants and how their algorithms are constantly changing. Now, we also have to worry about a prime minister who is not the brightest, but he is smart enough to know that we pose a threat to him, and they are trying to, increasingly, throw a regulation on top of us that infringes on our right to free speech. We will see.

We are pretty nimble, and that is the beauty of what we are doing. We are small; we are mighty; and we are flexible. And we are able to keep on going no matter what they try to stop us with.

AB: I do want to talk a little bit about the Digital Charter that is coming up, in a moment. Taylor, with North99, it is newish, and you are just kind of coming up and trying new things. How have you found it? In the what we call legacy media, in the new media, in this new age, it is far easier, I think, to gain access to listeners, to readers, to people that will engage with you or with your platform. How do you guys at North99 engage with your viewers, your audience?

TS: I think there is actually a lot to what Jeff just said.

I think it is the reason why we started North99, which is because we saw that the right was dominating the online conversation. The newsfeed, social channels is where a lot of people get their news. It is the primary news source for a whole range of demographics now. We had just sort of abandoned the field to people like Jeff Ballingall, which is scary. I think there is something to be said about his insight, which is that these channels are conducive to groups that can speak in plain, ordinary language to people. That is how you reach large audiences on those channels. What we saw is that the left in Canada—but not just in Canada, really in a lot of western countries—has been speaking to an increasingly stratified, elite segment of the population. Because of that, it is not doing well on Facebook, WhatsApp, all these channels that people are getting their information from, and we want to change that. The way we approach it is by—I am proud to say I am a populist leftist—we speak in populist, ordinary language, and I think that is really what drives success and effectiveness on these channels.

AB: Just humour me. What exactly is a 'populist leftist'?

TS: We believe, broadly, that the rules of our society have been constructed by a wealthy elite and probably many people who are members of this club. It is time that we take back control from those people and return it to ordinary people because that is what a healthy democracy looks like.

AB: I am glad you brought your own cheering section. You needed backup coming into the Albany Club.

I can respect that. Jeff, one of my takeaways from that is he basically said you are a pioneer. That is helpful.

TS: Absolutely.

JB: I would actually say that Taylor and I—we are friends, socially, too—agree on a lot of issues. There are things about leftwing populism that I really like, that I think a lot of rightwing parties or the establishment in Canada will not talk about that I think are ripe to talk about.

I think when it comes to problems in our society, whether it is cell phone bills or airline tickets, sometimes the conversation is just not being had. Let us have the conversation; whether there are rightwing solutions or leftwing solutions to these things, we just talk about things. There are things that are just broken, I think, in Canada, and we are so complacent in this country that we just accept it. Union Station has been under construction for 15 years, and it is three years past its due date. No one talks about it; we just accept it. These are the sorts of things that—I just want to have the conversation about a lot of the issues that we are just not having. I credit, whether it is Bernie Sanders or Taylor Scollon, for always bringing some—Bernie Sanders is a bit better looking than Taylor.

AB: I agree with the notion that good public policy should not be isolated to one side of the political aisle.

Jasmine, I want to bring you back into this conversation because of the organization and the members that you represent, their supporters. This is where you guys try to be an advocate on both sides of what Jeff was talking about in terms of consumer protection, for example, or even what Taylor is referring to with holding governments accountable.

JP: It is interesting what you are saying, Taylor, about standing up for taking power back from the wealthy, but I would actually say that one of our most popular campaigns, at the moment, is against the carbon tax. That is simply by number of petition signatures.

I am from Southwestern Ontario, which is quite a rural area. I grew up on a farm. Back there, you do not hear the same support for these high taxation schemes that are really popular in urban centres, but they really do hurt a lot of people, the little guy that you are speaking of. In terms of connecting with our supporters, our donors, the biggest issue for them is the carbon tax, because, really, a tax is not a way to change the climate; it is just a scheme to put more money in government pockets. In terms of connecting with them, they are the ones signing these petitions; they are the ones really driving, pushing the needle on that cause.

AB: Rick, I know you are anxious to weigh in on some of the things that have already been said, so please, go ahead.

RS: I wanted to jump in on this notion of populism and what left populism is, what right populism is. I think one key difference is both the left and the right in the populist sphere, anyway, agree that there is a lot of economic angst that people are feeling at the moment. I think where the left and the right depart from each other, at the moment, is what to do about that and who to blame. You see an awful lot of, frankly, extremism in conservative politics these days in terms of pointing at immigrants, pointing at refugees. Though I like some of what I see on Ontario Proud—I am all about beautiful Ontario waterfalls and the beauty of our countryside, which is a lot of your memes—there is a tendency in the conservative world these days to point fingers at people who are not responsible for the economic anxiety that other Canadians are feeling. The right these days is increasingly anti-pluralist, and the left is not. There is no symmetry in our political debate, at the moment. It is not like the right and the left are equally culpable for what is going on with politics, at the moment. That is a key difference I think in terms of what drives some of us on this stage.

AB: I will pivot from that then, and put this to you since we are having the conversation with respect to the economic accountability that we have seen. The right, the so-called right would argue that it is big-spending, left-wing politicians whom you have backed, or for whom you would advocate—not you—but in general, big spending, big government, big deficits, big debt.

Where is the future accountability for taxpayers in the long term? To quote my friends at the CTF, "Today's debts are tomorrow's taxes." Someone is eventually going to have to pay. This is the situation we find ourselves in, in Ontario and, ultimately, we will find ourselves in Canada in the coming years if they are not there already. How, then, do—? Pardon?

Q: I said 'Jesus Christ'. The amount of rhetoric here.

AB: That is part of it.

Q: I would love to see people talk about issues based on knowledge, facts and information as opposed to preconceived ideological positions. I cannot get that from the legacy media, and I do not do the hashtag stuff. I like to read.

JB: That is all we do!

AB: That is part of the point, here, which is that these are the individuals that are actually making the impact and having that difference. We are more than happy to take questions from the audience in just a few short moments. Jeff, let me throw it to you, then. I gave my little preamble about the left: Big spending. The right wants to cut everything and, perhaps, are more critical than necessary. How do you pierce through that?

How do you pierce through just being a rightwing advocate?

JB: I think we want to talk about politics in a way that is digestible and relevant, something that is humourous. Things that do really well for us are motives.

When Justin Trudeau is really hypocritical, when he talks about climate change and the need to put a price on pollution, and then he takes a government jet to Tofino to go surfing for the weekend, how does he rationalize that? That is something we will talk about. I think it does not matter who you are; people should follow through with their commitments. I think climate change is a real big concern. We should have leadership from our prime minister, and he should show that personally. I do not think this panel should be devolving into leftwing, rightwing debates. I do not think we are going to settle anything by calling each other communists or fascists or anything like that.

I think the opportunity we have today is to discuss about what opportunities we have with new technology and how those opportunities have presented themselves with the decline of legacy media and the rise of mobile technology, whether it is cell phones and social media.

AB: We are not dead yet. Taylor, it is an important point, because you are able to do the things that so-called legacy media cannot do. You guys have a wider berth with respect to the avenues you can use. You do not necessarily have unions around you. You do not have the accountability layers that legacy media does, though you still can be held accountable for the stuff that you put out. How do you guys pierce through maybe some of the criticism that might come your way and say, "This is just yet another propaganda arm of the so-called progressives, and they want to just spend more of my money." How do you guys get your information, for one thing, and then disseminate it in a way that is fair?

TS: I think we are completely transparent and explicit about our point of view, which is that we have a progressive point of view. I think that is no different than any other media outlet, including the legacy ones.

Certainly, the Toronto Sun has a point of view. Criticism is good. I welcome criticism. We get lots of criticism. We always strive to a standard of accuracy I think that people expect from us. When we fail to meet that standard, we hear about it instantly from our own audience. I do not know if this is true on the right side of things, but certainly on the progressive side of things, there is very little tolerance for inaccurate information, from misinformation. If we get something wrong in something we post, people get very upset about that.

There is really no advantage to us in trying to be anything but as factual as we can possibly be. In terms of where we get our information from, we depend on traditional journalists and reporters to produce that original report. I certainly think that is a public good that needs to be supported. We are no replacement for that.

AB: With so much out there and so many ways and means by which Canadians can consume, Jasmine, how do you take a very finite period of time that someone has to consume something, how do you make it impactful for them?

JP: That is really an interesting question, and I was actually going to go in the opposite direction very much based on the question you just asked. One idea that I brought with me when I came to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation was to really expand our podcast reach.

The reason for that is because I think there is a really deep appetite amongst Canadians for longer-form conversations that are less combative because I could not agree with you more. When you watch the six o'clock news—sorry, legacy media—and you have got a panel of people with combating views, you are not going to be moved. If you went in as a conservative, you are going to come out as a conservative and vice versa across the entire political spectrum. I think one really amazing trend that we are seeing that is just opening up a meaningful dialogue and less of an ideological one is this shift toward more long-form media, like podcasts, where I am often driving out of town a couple of hours, or in town for that matter, but you are driving; you put on a podcast, and you can listen about a topic for two hours, or you are cleaning your house on a Saturday, and you can really dive a lot deeper and have a much better understanding for the issue. I am glad to see that podcasts are emerging as a new, important medium.

I think the statistic was something like more than half of Canadians listen to podcasts once a month. That is really encouraging, and I hope we will break down this very siloed political discourse into more of a conversation about ideas. Not to be one of those panelists who talks too long, but ***[I want to note that]*** another interesting development that we are seeing along those lines that is conducive to the growth of podcasts has been the growth of, they call it the 'intellectual dark web', which is kind of a silly term. What it is, is a bunch of professors and intellectuals online, predominantly YouTube, of all different political stripes, including some Canadians like Jordan Peterson, but we have also got some scientists, like the Weinstein brothers and more leftwing, rightwing—it does not matter.

They are all just committed to open dialogue that is respectful with the goal of getting toward the truth, as opposed to winning a political debate. I think those YouTube videos and podcasts, both ***[of which are]*** long-form forms of media, are really important to getting beyond just siloed political discussions.

AB: Let us move forward and look to the next federal election, which is just a few short months away. One of the reasons why so many of these nice folks are here is to hear from all four of you how you will be engaging in that next federal election, what you will be doing.

I would prefer if you gave me away all your tactics, but you do not have to. How will the Broadbent Institute, for example, be engaging Canadians in terms of what you guys think that the ballot box question will be, come October?

RS: I think the ballot box question is going to be something related to the economic anxiety that people are feeling and what is to be done about it. We will be trying to provide good ideas in that regard, trying to make sure that the terrain is beneficial to progressives.

We are going to be doing some of what we just did in the Alberta election, which I was very proud of.

We spent a lot of time doing some background research on UCP candidates in Alberta and revealed some, frankly, really disturbing views from some of those candidates and made sure that became part of the public debate. One of the reasons that we started PressProgress is we did not think that the mainstream media—or maybe it is because we are Canadian and we are all very polite and we are conflict averse or something—was paying enough attention to the increasing extremism on the conservative side of the fence. We, unapologetically, go after that on a daily basis and try to surface that and point out how not normal those views are and not mainstream in terms of the history of this country.

We will be doing all of that and aiming all of that at the Conservatives over the next few months.

AB: And arguably with some success, because some of those candidates were hunted from the lineup.

RS: We brought to light some very objectionable views, doing a lot of background research on the web because nothing really dies online these days. I feel good about the fact that those folks are not in the UCP caucus.

I think that is a credit to—that is all good and good for Alberta and for the country.

AB: Jeff, your organization is going to be—as I said earlier, you have now Canada Proud.

JB: Yes.

AB: You have taken what you have done in Ontario and, I believe, in B.C. as well.

JB: B,C., others. I was involved in Alberta Proud which was involved in the Alberta election, too, but I do not manage that. They just hired me to help advise on it.

AB: There is expectation that you will be very much engaged in the next federal election. You have already mentioned a couple of things that you will be doing against Justin Trudeau, for example. For your success, what do you believe the ballot box question is, and then how will your organization come up with facts that are fair and easy for Canadians to understand, and how would you measure success?

JB: I think the election is already on. I think elections are now won way before election day. Kathleen Wynne—it took two years of us hammering her weekly. We are reaching millions of people very week, and with every misstep Kathleen Wynne and her government made, it built up a perception in people's mind. It was a motive, and we helped make Kathleen Wynne socially unacceptable. That is what we are trying to do against Justin Trudeau. Thank you. I am in the Albany Club, I think, anyways. That is what we are trying to do with Justin Trudeau, and we are doing it. We are reaching millions of people every week. We have done 13, almost 14 million video views since January 1st, and we have not had to spend a lot of money doing it.

We are on top of everything that Justin Trudeau does wrong. I will give a good example. A couple of weeks ago, Justin Trudeau was with the Japanese prime minister, and he mixed up China and Japan twice. Really embarrassing for our country.

Q: You did not sleep all night.

JB: Thanks for your commentary. Really embarrassing for our country. If anyone knows anything about geopolitics, it is incredibly embarrassing. The media glossed over it. The CBC wrote a headline, "China top of mind at Japanese talks," but we created memes. We made fun of Trudeau. We showed him how really foolish he is. Hundreds of thousands of people saw that content without us spending a dollar on it. We are hammering Trudeau. I think we have had a big impact on his low polling numbers, and we are going to continue to do so. We have got some really creative plans, and we have learned a lot about what PressProgress did during the Alberta election, so we are going to be really focused on research, but we are also going to do a lot of different things in the next few months trying to create content that people want to be entertained by and informed by.

AB: Yes, I think that is actually a key to a lot of it. People do want to be entertained, and, again, ***[there is]*** such a short period of time to get their attention. Taylor, with that question I posed to the others, what do you believe is going to be the ballot box question, and how will North99 be engaging?

TS: I agree with Rick. I think it will be centred around the economic anxiety that a lot of people are feeling in this country. I will say I am deeply concerned about the influence of the right online, not just the groups that Jeff has spun up, but there is a whole network of some legitimate, some astroturf corporate-funded organizations, many funded by oil sands operators, who reach millions of people every week on Facebook, on YouTube, through other channels, that nobody talks about, and nobody even sees it unless you happen to be in their audience, but their audience is enormous and they have an enormous impact and they can do that because they have spent years investing and building those organizations. And that work simply has not been done at that scale on the left, on the progressive side of things. I am concerned that they will be able to define the ballot box question. Our job is going to be to try to make sure that does not happen and to hold Andrew Scheer accountable every day for his views and his beliefs, which I think are well outside the Canadian mainstream and push candidates to embrace the progressive policies that we feel that they need to embrace in order to defeat the Conservatives in 2019.

AB: Ultimately, it is going to be about 30% of Canadians that are undecided that will probably ultimately decide who wins the next election. How do you get to those 30% Jasmine? How do you make an impact to them?

JP: Going back to what the ballot box questions, then, will be for that 30%, I think there will be two ballot box questions. The first will be a referendum on Justin Trudeau and his leadership. The second will be about the carbon tax. To go to the first, Justin Trudeau, I do not think is running against Andrew Scheer. I think he is running against who Justin Trudeau was in 2015 and what our expectations were for him then.

There has been a lot of mud thrown at him since then. There have been a lot of mistakes made. 'Sunny ways' is almost now—maybe thanks to Jeff, I do not know—a meme on social media, because that is really not how Canadians feel about his leadership, so I do think it will be a referendum on him. Secondly, in terms of getting to that 30%, with the carbon tax, the 905, certainly in Ontario, is a big determinant of how this province swings. They are commuting long distances. They are paying a lot in gas prices right now, and they are feeling the crunch. I do think that the carbon tax can really impact that swing vote there.

AB: We are going to take some questions from the audience, but one last thing I wanted to have all of you address, because it is top of mind and we are having this discussion right now—certainly in each of our newsrooms—is this Digital Charter that the prime minister has proposed. There is very little information around it. How do you think any of that, based on what we know, will impact anything that you do, for example, at the Broadbent Institute, Rick?

RS: I do not think so. I think it is just bizarre. I have no idea what he was talking about.

AB: I do not think he does.

RS: I do not know what it is. I just have no idea what that is about. At the end of the day, PressProgress is a news organization, so we are going to keep pumping out stories. The idea that the prime minister, at this late date, a few months before the election can, in any disinterested way, come out with this kind of tool is ludicrous. It has to be seen in that light.

JP: I agree. It was a really vague document. I do not think anyone knows what the heck it means. There was a little bit in there toward the end that could raise some concerns about what this means for freedom of speech, what this means in terms of government regulation of the media. Certainly, on the heels of the media bailout, there is a lot of concern already, so I think it is one thing to acknowledge that this is a legitimate concern and the government may or may not need to regulate these big tech players. It is to be determined.

There have not been any governments on this planet who yet have done so, I think, successfully. Will the Canadian government get it right? I do not think this charter does much on that front. Maybe they do need to regulate it. What I think no one is talking about is the concern that if the government just makes laws willy-nilly, that can also have really negative repercussions as well. We need to be really, really careful. This is unchartered territory, and the government can do a lot of damage here if it makes laws recklessly.

AB: Taylor, of course, this is all under the premise of the so-called fake news and bad actors that may be trying to interfere in our federal election or, frankly, in any of our elections. Any impact or any view, from you, on this so-called Digital Charter?

TS: I do not see how it would impact us. I have no strong opinion on it. I think we need to see more detail.

JB: Yes, we need to see more details. I think some of it is actually really interesting. Some of it is about our own personal data with banking and how we can transfer that over, how that will respond to fintech and the competition. I think that is a discussion we need to have. Other parts, I am really concerned about: Define 'disinformation', define 'hate'. I think that could be very dangerous if we go down that Orwellian route. As it stands now, I think it is a silly move from a silly prime minister.

AB: I know we have some questions from the audience. Would you like to go first, sir?

Q: I have spoken enough.

RS: He has heckled us throughout.

Q: Hi there. Thanks for this discussion. Sonia Carreno from the Interactive Advertising Bureau of Canada. I just wanted to touch on the charter a little bit and in relation to your discussion around memes, specifically, and this idea of when you start to, I guess talk about the fact that Canadians want to be entertained and creating memes and slamming and getting into the grill of the incumbent. How do you manage the perception of fake news? How do you certify the information that is being used, and how do you make that distinction? Are we starting to devolve, I guess into just "memery" to inform Canadians on important issues?

AB: Whoever wants to tackle that first, please.

JB: With our memes, there are clear ones that are jokes. Those ones we do not source. If Trudeau is saying, "Sushi is my favourite Chinese food," we are not going to source that. That is clearly a joke. In regards to everything else we do, we source it. We thoroughly source it. Obviously, we have our bias. Everyone has their bias. The Toronto Star has their bias. The Toronto Sun has their bias. That is part of it. I think in Canada, we have a huge vacuum for good, political satire. 22 Minutes is the lamest thing. No one watches it.

Outside of that, what do we have? Nothing. We do not have Saturday Night Live; we do not have Seth Meyers; we do not have John Oliver. We have nothing.

TS: CBC comedy.

JB: So good, I cannot wait to watch it. That is what is missing in our political discourse. I think that is—I am not a Trump fan, but I love listening to rightwing and leftwing voices talking about Donald Trump. I love that humour. I want to talk about politics. We should be making fun of politicians. That is an important part of democracy.

Q: How do you certify the content that is in your bite-sized information?

JB: There is a difference between a meme and a graphic.

For a graphic, if it is more in depth, we source it.

If we are stating a fact, like breaking news ***[and saying]*** this thing happened, it will say, "CBC News, July 20th, 2019," for example.

AB: The short answer is they still source us in the legacy media.

JB: Yes. As Taylor said earlier, we are just expanding the media ecosystem. We are not replacing legacy media in that regard. We just have our role to play. It has been going on all over Europe and in Britain and in the United States. Ontario probably is actually modelled off after a democratic group called MoveOn.org.

That is my inspiration. It is not anything else.

AB: Does anybody else want to weigh in on that?

RS: This notion of incorrect content, deliberately incorrect content is a problem in the conservative world. That is not a problem for progressives. Conservatives lie and progressives do not; '#fakenews' was popularized by Donald Trump.

AB: We really do not have much time for this room. Oh, my goodness. Wow.

RS: I was going to say. Again, there is no symmetry to this debate. It is not, like—anyway, I think it is important that people are held to account for what they are pumping out online. We are happy to be held to that standard.

Q: My question here, today, is for Rick and Taylor. When you look around the world, you look at Brexit, and you look at Trump getting elected, the Five Star Movement in Italy and Brazil, all of these rightwing movements that are winning big, I wonder if it is that a communications problem. And when you look

at the Ontario Proud and others, what do you see that they are doing right that you would like to get in on? Why I am asking that, Rick, is you talked about the candidates in Alberta, and I think PressProgress did some pretty groundbreaking work in terms of bringing down candidates, but Jason Kenney won 55% of the vote, so it did not shift the election.

RS: Only.

Q: I am just wondering: You look at the right online and what lessons are you pulling from that, and you think is it a communications problem, or are voters more rightwing? Where do you think that sits, to you and Taylor?

RS: I think, as progressives, we need to become more muscular and aggressive online and with our activism, generally. One thing that we have certainly learned from Ontario Proud and others is that we need to get out there, and we need to make our points in the most aggressive manner possible and reach way more people than we are reaching. This notion of populism and what lies at the root of it and why people, why voters are being driven to vote for parties, like the Five Star Movement where we are going to see a very difficult European election result next week with rightwing populist parties really gaining ground—I agree with Taylor that we need to better define what a progressive populism looks like. We need to offer better solutions to people that are feeling pinched.

The fact of the matter is that the average Canadian has not had a raise since the mid 1980s. That is a statistical reality, so it is not people's imagination when they are sitting around the kitchen table and are trying to figure out how to make ends meet, feeling like they cannot get ahead. So far, conservatives have done a better job providing supposed solutions to those voters rather than progressives. We need to better compete on that terrain.

TS: I agree with that. I think the communications has to come second after substance. What we have seen in a lot of these places where rightwing populism has ascended is that the traditional parties of the left, the social democratic parties essentially stopped speaking to ordinary people, and they stopped offering a critique of the system, which ordinary people correctly identified as no longer serving their interest. I understand why they voted for Brexit. I understand why people voted for Trump because they were the only people speaking to their problems. Until we fix that, I think the communications is never going to work, but the communications also has to be something we tackle. I think I alluded to that earlier in the way that we speak to people has to—we have to meet people where they are. We cannot expect to talk to people as if everyone is a grad student in political theory. That is just not realistic, and it is never going to work.

AB: We have time for two more questions.

Q: I just wanted to address some of the recent points that you made about language that is ordinary and simple to understand. In the age of digital media, it means that we are very much more inclined to identify what is wrong. How do we start to create this narrative where we do not just identify the issues, but we also make the solutions easy to understand in an age of social media? I think it is important that if we have a list of wrongs, we also have a list of ways to address them that people can easily digest.

AB: Jasmine, I think that you could probably address that. It is easy to point out the problems. Sometimes the solutions are easy, but how do you get Canadians or get anybody to appreciate them or understand them?

JP: Can someone else start? To be honest, I am still trying, one thing, I guess I would say is you are right that when you watch the media, sometimes it seems like everything is going wrong. It is almost like a bias that you develop. Not to diminish that there are a lot of big issues this country is facing, but a book that I really enjoyed recently was Steven Pinker's Enlightenment Now, which talks about all of these trends that show that we are actually headed in a really great direction—like, so many important metrics, not only in Canada, but across the world in terms of quality of life, longevity, education-wise. All of these things are really improving. You do not see a reporter standing in a peaceful zone saying there has not been a war here in 100 years, so I think the media does often skew, in our minds, that things are going wrong, but there really are a lot of things that are going right. It is just not really clickbait.

AB: Yes, I think that is part of the issue.

RS: I think things are going to hell in a handbasket.

AB: You are just doom and gloom.

TS: I think there is a good example of this at work if you look at how the American left has responded to the climate crisis and how the government here has responded to the climate crisis. If you look at the signs that the kids who are part of the Sunrise Movement advocating for Green New Deal in the U.S. carry around, they say "Good Jobs, Livable Future." Everyone can understand what that means. It is clear. Here, we talk about pollution tax with a rebate, but you have got to do the rebate on your taxes, and then there is some exemptions for people. No one understands the solution.

I think it is absolutely critical that we communicate our positive priorities in a way that is also simple to understand—the same way we communicate our critiques.

RS: I agree with that.

JB: I think, to that end, too, our legacy media in Canada—not to bemoan them even more—are not really serving our interests. They are talking about insider baseball nonsense, who used what stock photo during what campaign. No one cares. They are not speaking to people's everyday concerns and solutions to our problems.

I think American media is now adjusting. We have seen the decline of major U.S. newspaper dailies, but then suddenly the Washington Post and the New York Times are doing really well. One of the reasons I think the New York Times is doing well is they have a podcast called "The Daily," and they are using new mediums to tell new stories. I listen to "The Daily" every day. It is not rightwing or leftwing. I think it is just pretty centrist, and it is very interesting. That is what I really—I think that is what Canadians are craving here, at home. I think there is a huge lust for good, meaningful content about issues where it is just not drive-by smears and process. In Ottawa, we have the Press Gallery. They all drink at the same bar. They all know each other. It is so clubby, and they are not writing for the mom in Whitby or the plumber in Kamloops. They are writing to please themselves.

I think there are a lot of great journalists here in Canada, but, for too often, the press galleries are the ones that drive the narrative, and they are the ones that are doing a disservice to this country.

AB: We have time for one last question for whoever gets to the mic first, and I would ask you all to keep your answers short, please.

Q: If it is the last question, I would just like to thank all the panelists. It has been a really entertaining discussion. You see it a lot in the United States, but there are some anxieties, particularly on the conservative end of big social media giants banning certain commentators for their views on whatever might be going on today. Do you think that in this age of social media—and, I guess, political discourse is mainly gauged on social media—it is okay that social media giants basically can control and decide who gets to say what, or should it be something that the government maybe regulates, mandates, and there be a standard set that everybody has to follow, and the government should step in?

AB: Who should be the arbitrator?

RS: I think it is very important that if you are spewing hate online, you should be banned. I am very proud: PressProgress did an article on Faith Goldy this past week, digging into her donors. Made her very annoyed at us, which I am delighted about. I am not sure it is an either/or in terms of your question. I think that if you are Facebook, if you are Twitter, if you are Instagram, you should be proactively clamping down on people who are using your platforms in objectionable ways—and there should be common sense government regulation as well. I do not think it is one or the other.

I think it is a good thing that Facebook has finally started to get out ahead of this stuff, even if it is difficult, even if you shut a voice down over here, and one pops up over here. These are big, complicated platforms. It is not easy, but it is critical that these kinds of voices be held accountable in social media space in the same way that they are in real life.

JP: If I can just jump in. I think nobody in this room would say that we want hate speech on Facebook. That is not the issue. The issue is who defines what hate speech is. That is a very difficult question to answer.

Recently, on The Post Millennial, they did an article about how a number of academics and respectable people in this country were calling Quillette a white supremacist publication, which is very far from the truth, in my opinion, vastly untrue. It is scary when you get into this de-platforming business. We had, actually, Jordan Peterson and Dave Rubin actually, even though, I think Jordan Peterson was doing something close to $70,000 a month in user donations. He was getting on Patreon, which for those of you who do not know, it is a crowdfunding platform. He was making $70,000 a month in pure user donations and decided to abandon the platform, because it had made some very arbitrary decisions with regards to de-platforming.

We can all agree, no one wants hate speech, but it is problematic when you get to the point of who gets to define that and, I think it is very questionable to depend on the government to have common sense in that regard.

TS: I am suspicious of concentrated corporate power, and I do not think we should be delegating decisions about what is and what is not hate speech to Mark Zuckerberg or Jack Dorsey or any of these people. I think those are decisions that should be made democratically. The fact that we are not making them democratically now and just leaving it up to Facebook to decide, I think is a real problem.

JB: Yes, I tend to agree with that, too. I think the concern, obviously, is hate has no place in the public discourse, and Facebook has every right to ban people, but, when they do so, they should give reasons. There are people who have been banned, and I want to know why Paul Joseph Watson or others have been banned.

Tell us, what did they do wrong? I think that would make everyone feel better, and that would give us more trust in these platforms. There is also the debate about whether Facebook needs to be broken up. They have so much power. We do not know how Facebook's newsfeed algorithm works. It is a little bit alarming to think about how much power Mark Zuckerberg has and how he can decide elections, how Google can filter search results. These are things that we need to be cognizant of. I am worried that the solution will be worse than the problem.

JP: If you saw Zuckerberg in front of the Senate in the U.S., it was actually very comical. For anyone who has not seen it, lawmakers were trying to ask the necessary questions to really hammer out some sort of regulation. I think we are very far from—the government really lags behind.

AB: Thank you to all of you. Jeff, Jasmine, Taylor, Rick—a thoughtful conversation.

Certainly, we concluded on not very much, but we did great on a few things, which I think is fascinating. Thank you to all of you, of course, for attending this evening. We hope that you were somewhat enlightened. Maybe a few of your questions got answered.

That is the challenge with this type of discussion, which is that there are for more questions yet to be posed. Thank you to the Empire Club for hosting us this evening.

KE: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen: The Fresh Faces Panel! Of course, that Rick Smith is the freshest of all the fresh faces. I am saying that for his kids, of course.

Thanks, Rick. We are going to invite our sponsor up. Thank you to Navigator for sponsoring us.

Mike Van Soelen will be speaking on behalf of Navigator. Thank you.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Limited; Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Thanks. I will be brief. Navigator appreciated the opportunity to sponsor this event.

We care a lot about conversations and how they take place in this country. It was great to hear from four people who are doing this in dynamic and interesting ways and really fascinating to hear their thoughts ahead of the next federal election. On behalf of Navigator, for the panelists, thank you very much.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Quick announcements, everybody. There has been a bunch of concepts talked about tonight. One of them is 'hate speech'. The Empire Club has decided to delve into this issue. We have put together an event on June 13th that features Bernie Farber, Global TV's Farah Nasser, and academics and many others to talk about this issue in a real way. That is on June 13th at lunch. Of any of you interested in that, I hope you come.

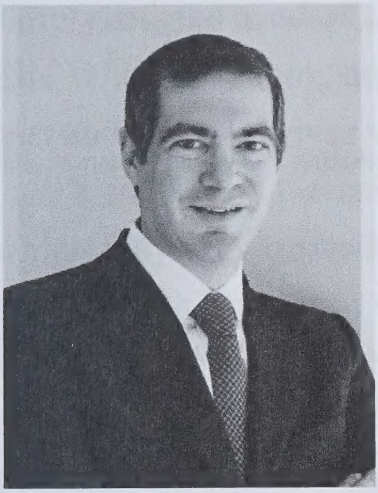
For this evening's event, food will be served again in a minute. There are drinks coming back. I want you guys to enjoy yourselves tonight.

There is one more evening event this season we have lined up so far, and that is with Minister Mary Ng, who is the Minister of Small Business, and she is going to be moderating an event called "Women Who Build," which is about women in the construction industry.

There are very few of them. They are talking about their issues, their challenges, their successes. That is coming up next month.

We have also one more federal event, a federal politics event. We are doing CBC's Power in Politics, live at the Empire Club on June 10th, at lunch. Come out to that.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you.



PETER LUONGO

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
ROTHMANS, BENSON &
HEDGES INC.

WITH: UNSMOKE CANADA: HEATING, VAPING AND THE END OF CIGARETTES

Welcome Address, by Mr. Michael Kobzar, Director of Sales, Ontario, Siemens Canada; First Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

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May 28, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, from the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you just joining through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present Peter Luongo, Managing Director of Rothmans, Benson & Hedges. And today's topic is "#UnsmokeCanada: Heating, Vaping and the End of Cigarettes."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Peter Luongo, Managing Director, Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc.

Guests:

Mr. John Carbone, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Core-Mark International

Mr. Philippe Gervais, Principal, Navigator Ltd.

Mr. Mike Ghesquiere, Manager, National Key Accounts, Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc.

Mr. Peter Hermant, Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Peter Kerr, Vice President, Business Development, Sobeys Inc.

Mr. Ziggy Krupa, Management Consulting, Cedar Croft Consulting Ltd.; Treasurer, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Julie Paise, Director, Reduced-Risk Products, Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc.

Mr. Jan Westcott, President and Chief Executive Officer, Spirits Canada; Director, Empire Club of Canada

These are certainly challenging times for traditional retail businesses. Even large companies and brands need to be acutely aware of changing dynamics, changing demographics, globalization, e-commerce, changing consumer attitudes, online retail, and the use of social media.

I am sure many people in this room work for organizations that are grappling with some of those challenges right now. I venture to say that a company like Rothmans, Benson & Hedges has a few more challenges layered on top of those. Knowing when and how to pivot makes all the difference in the world. It is the difference between Amazon or Barnes & Noble, Netflix or Blockbuster, Nikon or Kodak.

There are many examples of organizations which have simply refused to adapt. There is a famous nautical quote by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and it goes like this, "One ship drives east and another drives west, yet the same winds blow.

It's the set of the sail and not the gale that determines which way they go." Today, this quote has far more resonance in the business world than it does in the Maritime world. Our guest, today, is acutely aware of this reality.

Peter Luongo served as the vice president of Treasury & Planning for Philip Morris International. In 2016, he was named Managing Director for the Canadian market.

Before joining Philip Morris, he was a partner at the investment banking firm, Centerview Partners LLC.

He has extensive experience in advising international clients across a range of sectors, and some of his clients were Heinz, Kraft, PepsiCO, Campbell's and Anheuser-Busch.

Before I call Mr. Luongo to the stage, there are some cue cards in front of you. If you have a question that you would like to ask at the end, he is gracious enough to have agreed to take questions. Just fill those out, and, at some point, just wave them in the air, and they will be collected and brought up to me to the front.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in economics from Princeton University. Please, welcome Mr. Peter Luongo.

Mr. Peter Luongo

Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for having me here today. As Michael said, I am Peter Luongo, and I am the Managing Director for Rothmans, Benson & Hedges, the Canadian affiliate of Philip Morris International.

Why am I here with you today? As an executive with the world's largest tobacco company, it may surprise you that I am here today to talk to you about our desire to stop selling cigarettes in Canada and about a future without cigarettes, a smoke-free Canada. Imagine that, a Canada where cigarettes are no longer sold by 2035—hopefully, even sooner—because our society is in transition in our workplace diversity, in the energy that we use to heat our homes and to power our cars, in the food we eat, in how we communicate and, yes, also in how we consume tobacco.

I am here today to talk to you about how, together, we can Unsmoke Canada. Before I unpack that word 'Unsmoke', I want to be very clear on one point. At Rothmans, Benson & Hedges, we want to help Unsmoke the world and that includes guarding youth against taking up smoking, vaping, heating or any other form of nicotine-containing products. I want to be emphatic on that point. We want to do everything possible to stop youth from taking up any of these types of products. That said, what does 'Unsmoke' mean for adults? Because it is an odd word, is it not?

I hope it gets you to pause, to turn your head and ask, "Tell me what it means." The idea to 'Unsmoke Canada' does need a bit of reflection. That is the point, to prompt a pause, prompt the question, to spark a conversation.

For us, the meaning of 'Unsmoke' is clear. It means to rid your life of smoke. Quite simply, if you do not smoke, do not start. If you smoke, quit. If you do not quit, change.

It is hard to argue with those three simple sentences because if you smoke, and you do not quit, then change is a better choice.

This is not a message that people expect to hear from a big tobacco company. In fact, it is not a message that people may be willing to hear from a big tobacco company.

I think that is okay, and we should acknowledge that because we cannot have a meaningful conversation unless we acknowledge where we have come from and where we are today.

If we can be candid together, if we can be open-minded together, then we can have a powerful conversation about creating extraordinary change in the lives of Canadian smokers and in the lives of people who love them and that is how we can Unsmoke Canada. We cannot do it alone.

Quick show of hands. How many people in the room, today, consider themselves smokers? I am not surprised to see that. Smokers, today, often even hide the fact that they smoke, even from people they know well. Even from their loved ones. What we do not see, we do not think exists. Out of sight really is out of mind.

It may surprise you that many Canadians today still do smoke. In fact, nearly 5 million Canadians of all walks of life are regular smokers of cigarettes today. In total around the world, there are more than 1.1 billion smokers out there.

That is around 18% of the world's population. That is despite fairly aggressive measures by governments around the world to reduce smoking rates over the years.

The World Health Organization believes that number is not going to change very much over the next decade.

A billion smokers today. A billion smokers ten years from now. How do we help those smokers?

Chances are, if you are like me, someone you know smokes. It could be a family member; it could be a friend; it could be a co-worker; but someone in your life is probably a smoker. Let us be honest: It probably bothers you. In fact, if you really admit it, you would really say that you hate it.

You hate the fact that that person smokes. You want them to stop, but deep down you know that they may not quit. So, you are torn because, on the one hand, you want them to stop smoking. On the other hand, you know they have not quit yet, and there is a good chance that they are not going to quit, so you would like for there to be a better way for them. At RBH, we share that feeling.

We all employ different strategies to deal with people who smoke. Some take the slow-and-steady-reminders-to-quit approach. Some believe in more of a tough-love approach to the situation. Others believe that you need to let the person figure it out for themselves. Let us be honest: We have all felt that internal conflict when it comes to these people whom we love, that conflict of whether to leave them alone and let them be or whether to jump in and to make them stop.

If you think about anyone you know who smokes, you would probably agree that you care about that person, and you wish there was something you could do to get them to change, if they are not going to quit. You are right to be pragmatic about this. You are right to want an alternative for someone who does not quit. You are not alone because at RBH, we care, too, and we are doing something about it.

First, we need to define the problem. Any scientist will tell you that tobacco is not the main problem with the cigarette, and it is not the nicotine either. It is the smoke.

Contrary to popular opinion, tobacco is not the primary cause of smoking-related diseases, nor is it the nicotine.

Let me be clear, neither tobacco nor nicotine is risk-free. The main health risks from cigarettes come from the burning, the combustion process, the inhalation of smoke, which contains thousands of chemicals.

Public health authorities have identified many, many chemicals in the smoke of cigarettes that are related to causing diseases, such as lung cancer, cardiovascular disease and emphysema. The big problem is the smoke and smoke comes from burning. In fact, any time you are around smoke it is not good for you, whether it comes from cars, from factories, from forest fires. Smoke is not good. Whether it is first-hand or second-hand, smoke is bad. With a cigarette it is the burning process that produces the largest amount of harmful chemicals. While nicotine, as I said, is addictive, it is not nearly as dangerous as the smoke from cigarettes.

That is why you see, actually, nicotine replacement therapies in drug stores: nicotine patches, nicotine gum, nicotine sprays—you name it—because nicotine is not the main problem. If we go back to the nearly 5 million people in Canada who smoke and the more than one billion people worldwide who smoke, we know that these nicotine products do not always result in people quitting. Why is that? It is pretty simple. When you are talking about a patch or a piece of gum, it is not going to create the same sensory experience that someone gets when they light a cigarette.

This made our colleagues at PMI actually ask the question: "What if there was a way to take the smoke out of a cigarette, to have a product that did not burn, that was smoke-free that could truly help people to break away from cigarettes if they are not going to quit? What if there was a way to Unsmoke the world and to help those who smoke make better choices?" People have been consuming tobacco in the same way for centuries, by burning it and inhaling the smoke. It is time for change. Technology is revolutionizing the way we live our lives. Now, new technology could mean the end of cigarettes. I am not going to bore you with the technical details, but, fundamentally, new technology is giving today's smokers better options for the future.

The reality is simply this: It was industrial innovation that took tobacco into mass-produced cigarettes for smoking, and it is innovation that is now taking the smoke out of tobacco.

Our parent company actually invested more than $9 billion, and that is billions with a 'B', to find smokers a better alternative to cigarettes. We hired hundreds of the world's best scientists, engineers and innovators, and we set up a state-of-the-art lab for them to work in. With breakthroughs in science and technology, PMI created a range of new, smoke-free devices that deliver nicotine without creating the same harmful smoke as cigarettes. PMI took this holistic approach because there is no one device that will work for everyone.

The first of these products to be marketed by us in Canada is called IQOS. It looks like a pen. It comes in a small, rechargeable battery case that fits in your pocket. Sold separately are tobacco sticks, and we call them 'heat sticks', actually, that the user inserts into the IQOS device. You then press the on button, and the battery heats up the tobacco to a temperature that is less than half of that of a combusted cigarette. What does that mean? What it means is that you release the flavour; you release the nicotine in a vapour, but without the smoke, without creating all of those harmful chemicals that I mentioned earlier—so not hot enough to burn and not hot enough to create microscopic solid particles, or ash, that comes with the burning process.

That is the key word, 'create' because, if the chemicals and the ash are not created, then they cannot go into your lungs in the first place, nor can those chemicals bother people around you, so no more second-hand smoke.

It is a scientific breakthrough that, quite frankly, is being recognized around the world. Just this month, in fact, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration reached a milestone decision after reviewing extensive scientific research.

For the first time in its history, actually, the FDA authorized an electronically heated tobacco product for sale in the United States, and it was IQOS.

After two years of fulsome review, the FDA actually determined that authorizing IQOS for sale in the U.S. market was, and I quote, "appropriate for the protection of public health." Let me repeat those words from the FDA, because I think they are important. They are allowing the sale of the product, because doing so is "appropriate for the protection of public health."

Why did they make that determination? Among many considerations, looking at data from lots of different studies and lots of different angles, one of the things that they recognized—and this is, again, a direct quote from the news release—was that IQOS "produces fewer or lower levels of some toxins than combustible cigarettes." That is the heart of the point: We are dramatically reducing the amount of chemicals that are produced because there is no smoke.

The truth is that better is not perfect. Let me be clear. No tobacco product is risk-free, but, at the same time, not all tobacco products are the same. I think that it is time for us to recognize that fact as a society, and it is time for a change.

Let me actually take a step back because I actually lived this change myself. I think, as you heard in the introduction, six years ago, I was actually sitting as an investment banker. Philip Morris was a client. At the time I smoked. Working with Philip Morris, I started to see the first prototypes of these products, well before commercial sale.

I said, "Huh, this is kind of interesting. This is something that I think would benefit me, but also society, as a whole." When I actually got the opportunity, I moved my family over to Switzerland to start working with Philip Morris full time and started to work on the initial launches for these products.

It was after that we started to launch these products, and it was in some early test markets that we started to get the insights, to get real data, real reactions from consumers, real scientific evidence and additional scientific evidence that we had not had when we first started. That was my real aha moment on these products. It is a time when you can actually see the future. I do not mean 'see' like a crystal ball, but I mean it is a time when you realize that there is a new technology, a new concept that is going to fundamentally change how our world works.

I think we heard some examples from Michael earlier. There are plenty of times where, in hindsight, you realize that technology is going to disrupt the way that we live our lives. You do not have to, if I take the example of cellphones, have understood 20 years ago exactly what a smartphone was going to look like in 2019 to appreciate that the massive availability of mobile devices was going to have profound impacts for society. We do not know exactly the path, but we know change is coming. I think we have the same opportunity here. For me, the handwriting was on the wall. The future will be smoke-free. The only questions for me are: How do we get there, and who is going to lead the transformation?

When you are faced with these kinds of transformative opportunities—challenges even—there are really two options when you are in business. The first is to put your head in the sand, to try and stick with your old business model for as long as possible and hope for the best, or you can try to lead the change, to embrace the opportunity, to build a better business, and, hopefully, have a positive impact on society as you do it.

That is why I was actually extremely excited to move to Canada two years ago, to get out from behind my desk job in Switzerland and to be on the ground as we were launching IQOS for the first time here. I guess that is enough about me. You are probably sitting there asking, "I don't work for the company, and I do not smoke, so what does that mean for me?" The truth is, we have all been impacted by smoking in one way or another. I think, to conclude here, it is important that we all recognize that change is happening.

In only a few years, we have more than 7 million smokers in almost 50 countries around the world who have quit cigarettes entirely and switched to IQOS—that is, 7 million smokers who have taken a decision to reduce their risk of tobacco-related disease; 7 million smokers whose friends and family can feel better about the fact that despite the fact that they are still using nicotine, they have made a better choice for themselves and for their family and thousands more are changing every day. That is progress. That is a step to Unsmoke the world. In fact in Canada, we have set our target date: By 2035, we want to Unsmoke Canada.

We want to have a smoke-free future. What needs to happen in fact for us to Unsmoke Canada? Actually, it starts with a conversation, much like the one that I hope we are having here, today. It is a conversation with our friends and family; it is a conversation with healthcare professionals, with other industry stakeholders and with government regulators, because we need healthcare professionals and regulators to take a common-sense approach to these issues to understand that smokers need access to better information about the alternatives that are available to them.

The reality is that, today, there is a lot of confusion in the market. The restrictions that are in place for these products, like IQOS, are virtually identical to the restrictions that are in place for cigarettes. That is just wrong because we know all of the scientific evidence that shows that switching to IQOS is a better choice than smoking cigarettes.

We also need you. We need you to believe that Canada should take a pragmatic approach to make better choices available to current adult smokers. It might not be perfect, but it is progress. Let us face it, smokers and the people who love them do not need our judgment or our moralizing. They need our care, our compassion, our openness, and they deserve our help. Our message is simple: There are alternatives, and, together, we can Unsmoke Canada. Thank you.

MK: As mentioned earlier, he is willing to take some questions. If you have any further questions, just raise your cards in the air, and we will have somebody collect them up. Some were brought to me already.

Rothmans, Benson & Hedges has been in Canada for a long time. Why now?

PL: It comes down to having the technology available to us. Actually, a lot of these ideas have been floating around for decades, even. It is only now that we have finally developed products that not only reduce risk, but also are accepted by adult smokers because, at the end of the day, if you have a product that is perfectly risk-free, but no one switches from cigarettes, it is not going to have the benefit to public health. It has really only been in the last few years that the technology has gotten to the point where it is interesting.

MK: What is the biggest hurdle to getting to smoke-free by 2035?

PL: Really, it is having people like regulators, so Health Canada, in particular as well as provincial governments and healthcare professionals understand that smoke-free alternatives like IQOS should be part of the solution. If we do it in a responsible way, if we focus on educating adult smokers in terms of what their options are, then it will be much more impactful. The problem today, Michael, is that everyone knows what cigarettes are. Everyone knows where you can buy them. Everyone knows what they do. They do not necessarily understand the alternatives, and, importantly, they do not necessarily understand the science between the alternatives and what the differences are. You have a lot of different options out there. You have a lot of vaping products; you have heated tobacco products like our IQOS. And I would almost guarantee that the number of people who actually understand the science and the difference between those two products is pretty limited today.

MK: Thank you. How do you expect to shift the mentality of the regular smoker? Education?

PL: This is something that will clearly take time, and I think we all understand that. The more that we can get out, explain our vision, the more that we can have those conversations and actually answer the tough questions, the more that we can have an impact and slowly get people to understand what we are trying to do.

MK: I know a lot of the laws in Canada are with respect to where you can smoke. They have to do with isolating people from smoke, patios, outside umbrellas, things like that. Now, you have a product that does not smoke. Do the laws have to keep up, or are those laws irrelevant because there is no smoke?

PL: From a health perspective, because there is no smoke, the laws should largely be irrelevant. There is also the component, though, of just being polite to people around you and respectful.

There are some areas where, let us say, on an airplane, I think it would be reasonable to continue to restrict all forms of anything that is in the air in a closed space like that, but, when you get into places like public parks, I think that we should be looking at fewer restrictions on things like vaping or heated tobacco where we know you do not have the same impact on the others around you, from a health perspective.

MK: Can you, please, comment on vaping and youth in Canada? How does Unsmoke Canada address this issue?

PL: I think where—and I try to be extremely clear—we want to make sure that the right restrictions are in place, so that youth do not get a hold of any of these products. It comes down to how they are available, the strictness of the age verification, and, frankly, some of the flavours that are used and how we can ensure that we are really targeting adult smokers. It goes to how you are communicating; it goes to where you are communicating; and it goes to the messages that you are using and the products that are being sold. Vaping is something that is a very viable alternative for adult smokers. I think that we need to recognize that and not over-react on the one hand. On the other hand, there definitely needs to be a balance there to make sure that it does not fall into the hands of the wrong people.

MK: Thank you very much. Thank you, Peter. Now, I am pleased to introduce my table mate and my new friend, Peter Kerr from Sobeys.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Peter Kerr, Vice President, Business Development, Sobeys

It is certainly my honour here to thank you, Michael, and you as well, Peter, for speaking to us today and educating us on the plan going forward. As I was listening to your speech, I was particularly struck by the similarities between what is happening in your industry, driven by the transformation that your company has undertaken and the disruption that we have seen in other industries with companies like Uber, Airbnb and Amazon. Challenging the status quo and challenging ourselves to do better can lead to innovative new opportunities.

I am heartened to hear the strides that you are making as an industry leader, and I am excited to see and learn more about the future that you envision for your organization.

Thank you very much for speaking to us today, and thank you to the Empire Club of Canada for organizing this opportunity. Thank you.

Concluding Remarks, by Michael Kobzar

Very quickly, we look forward to seeing you at some of our upcoming events. On June 10th, the CBC's there will be the "Power & Politics Panel," which is featuring Vassy Kapelos.

On June 13th, we will have "The Rise of White Nationalism in Canada." Also, on June 13th, in the evening, look forward to "Women Who Build," featuring the Honourable Mary Ng.

I declare this meeting adjourned. Thank you.

VASSY KAPELOS

HOST OF CBC'S POWER AND POLITICS, MODERATES A PANEL OF POLITICAL STRATEGISTS:

COUNTDOWN TO FEDERAL ELECTION 2019

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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June 10, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Shangri-La Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present the second event in our series looking at the upcoming federal election. Today's topic is "Countdown Election 2019," with Vassy Kapelos, host of CBC's Power in Politics, and political strategists, Amanda Alvaro, Kathleen Monk and Tim Powers.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Ms. Amanda Alvaro, Founder and President, Pomp & Circumstance
Ms. Vassy Kapelos, Host, Power & Politics
Ms. Kathleen Monk, Principal, Earnscliffe Strategy Group
Mr. Tim Powers, Vice Chairman, Summa Strategies Canada Inc.; Managing Director, Abacus Data

Guests:

Mr. Giancarlo Drennan, Principal, Maple Leaf Strategies Inc.
Dr. Gordon McIvor, Past President, Empire Club of Canada
Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Ltd.; Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada
Mr. Greg Stanford, Consul General, U.S. Consulate General in Toronto
Ms. Rebecca Yu, Vice President, Market Access and External Affairs, Takeda Canada Inc.
Mr. Gamze Yüceland, General Manager, Takeda Canada Inc.

It is not the first time this season that the Empire Club of Canada has worked with CBC personalities. A few weeks ago, we presented Peter Mansbridge and British historian, Dan Snow, with a look at Canadian history, at a fantastic event. This season is also not the first time in our long history where we have had individuals from CBC. In a 1991 speech to the Empire Club of Canada, president of CBC at the time, Gérard Veilleux, described the role of the CBC with Canada as the following: "We at the CBC know our first task. We have to clean and clear and reopen our windows on each other. We must help Canadians to hear as well as to listen, to see as well as to watch. That is the basic service we can and must provide.

This is an immense task, to allow us to see each other not as we fear but as we hope, and to help re-open a future founded in the tolerance and understanding that springs from hope rather than the debilitating sense of grievance and alienation that springs from fear and intolerance."

In that vein, Vassy, through her work on Power in Politics, has done this by tackling Canadian issues head on through employing the perspective of individuals from across the country and across many political spectrums and providing a national forum for reasonable and respectful debate. Since taking over the show in 2018, Vassy has brought her own style, competence and brand of authenticity. Vassy is both respectful and persistent.

She is known to get the answers to questions that Canadians want to know. If you do not want to give them to her right away, she will wait you out.

With the Canadians' next election coming up, it is a perfect time to have a great panel of experts with Vassy at the

Empire Club of Canada. Let us get started. Before I get started I just want to prepare everyone. There is going to be a Q&A today. Vassy will take the Q&A questions.

If you think of questions while the presentation is going on, you will be ready for the time at the end. In writing my remarks I was reflecting on the fact that I met our first panelist during the 2007 election campaign. At the time, I was new to politics. Amanda was a senior political advisor and spokesperson in the provincial government. The most notable incident was, of course, that I mis-navigated the media bus with Amanda on it and, of course, all the media.

The campaign itself was called "Moving Forward Together," so you can imagine the amount of jokes that I received at the time because the bus was not moving forward; it was going the wrong way, but Amanda was very nice about it. I do remember that. It was a bad day, but everyone recovered. Amanda went on to serve as Senior Communications Advisor for both Justin Trudeau's leadership bid and his party's election campaign. She is also the Founder of Artbound, a Canadian charity responsible for building arts schools and programs in developing countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome Senior Political Strategist and President of Toronto-based public relations agency Pomp & Circumstance, Amanda Alvaro. Our next panelist is a senior communications and campaign strategist with over 15 years of experience in media, politics and the not-for-profit sector. A principal at Earnscliffe, Kathleen previously served as Director of Communications for NDP leader, Jack Layton, serving as the campaign spokesperson and media director during the NDP's 2011 federal election.

She is also Founding Executive Director and catalyst for the Broadbent Institute. Kathleen previously worked in newsrooms in Toronto, Ottawa and Washington. She holds an MSc in politics and communication from the London School of Economics, so no degrees at all, and remains an active volunteer with Equal Voice. Please, welcome Political Strategist and Principal at Earnscliffe, Kathleen Monk.

A columnist and commentator, our next guest has worked on numerous Canadian federal political campaigns for conservatives and conservative parties dating back to the early 1990s. Working as an advisor and political operative, Tim has advised party leaders and cabinet ministers.

He has also fundraised for federal and provincial parties across the country. Tim is also the current Chairman of Rugby Canada. Please, welcome Vice-Chairman of Summa Strategies and Managing Director of Abacus Data, Tim Powers. Today's moderator, prior to working at CBC, was Ottawa Bureau Chief and Host of The West Block on Global News. While covering federal politics, she interviewed everyone from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. She has covered and anchored multiple elections, both federally and provincially. She also reports on stories and events all over the world.

Before working in Ottawa, Vassy covered provincial politics in Alberta and Saskatchewan. She is the recipient of an Edward R. Murrow Award for her work on a series called Code Red, which exposed the shortcomings of Edmonton's emergency response system. That has nothing to do with the movie with Jack Nicholson in it.

During her downtime, Vassy loves to bake, read, avoid exercise—that is what her bio says; I like that one—and spend time with family, friends and her PVR. Please, welcome the Host of CBC's Power in Politics, Vassy Kapelos.

Countdown to Federal Election 2019

VK: Hi, everybody. So nice to see you. Thanks for ripping that straight from the bio, appreciate it. I do like to avoid exercise and spend time with my family, which are all here. Thanks. I want to thank everyone so much for coming this afternoon. It is such a pleasure to do this in real life. Normally, I am just staring into a black box talking to them from various parts of the country.

Just in case you do not know the way that we are doing this is on our show, Power in Politics, 5 o'clock Monday to Friday, CBC News Network—we have three segments of the show. A big chunk, the primary chunk of the show, the highest rated part of the show, is the Power Panel and this is my Wednesday Power Panel. Every Wednesday, we get together, and, for about 40 minutes, we debate the political topics du jour, how they relate to the election, whatever it is from the day.

Essentially, the setup is we have a journalist plus me and then somebody that represents in the vein of the three major parties. Sometimes we have the Green Party now, lately, because they are on the up, which I am sure we will talk about, but this is the set up, and so that is what we are going to try to accomplish today.

As Kent mentioned, we will be taking questions from the audience, so get your questions ready in about 20, 25 minutes' time. You can throw anything you want at these guys, and they will ably answer it, I am sure. First, we are going to gear this whole thing towards the election, because we are about 130 or 125 days away, not that I am counting. I am super-excited.

We want to talk about some of the issues involved in it, about the leaders, their weaknesses, their good qualities and what we think is going to happen. Tim, I am going to start with you. What is the defining issue of this election going to be?

TP: Affordability. How is that? Do you want more?

VK: Yes, explain why.

TP: I think though the economy is doing exceptionally well, and the government was looking to Trump, but that as they should, on Friday, I think we have had the lowest unemployment since 1976.

KM: Do you want to say that again?

AA: Lowest unemployment since 1976.

TP: One compliment you will get, but people across the country feel hard pressed to live and survive and to get forward. I have seen it from Newfoundland and Labrador, where I am from, all the way out to the west coast. Parties are seeing that anxious nature, and you are seeing it in the distemper of the times in what is happening across the country in recent provincial elections. The established political order, rightly or wrongly, is being questioned. One quick example of that: Look at PEI. I am sure you do not all look at PEI. You may vacation in PEI. Best economy in the country. They just kicked their premier out. Normally, that premier would be sailing home, so it is going to be affordability.

VK: Amanda, if it is going to be affordability, how do the Liberals handle that? A million new jobs since Justin Trudeau was elected. Yet, even on Friday when he was in France, he was acknowledging that there is that anxiety out there. I get tweets all the time: "He keeps talking about how good the economy is, but my life does not feel any better." How do the Liberals address that?

AA: The economy only matters as it matters to your own pocketbook, as it matters to how you feel when you wake up in the morning, what you can afford, how you can afford it. Can you get to the hockey practice?

Can you get your kids in dance classes? I think despite the fact that the Liberals can trumpet and should continue to trumpet the idea that the economy is strong, the unemployment rate is at an all-time low, the problem is if people do not feel it, if that anxiety lingers underneath, they are going to make that a reality at the polls. I think that there is another thing that is happening. I agree. I think affordability is going to be one of the defining issues of the campaign. I think the Liberals would like climate to be another defining issue of the campaign, but I do not think it will be.

TP: I agree with you.

AA: There are some other issues, though, that are percolating underneath, and those are value issues, things like women's reproductive rights. You hear me?

Women's reproductive rights. I think that is—you can feel it just under the surface: Immigration and some of the issues related to that, the kind of country I want to live in, what it looks like, what it will look like for my kids and their grandkids. I think those issues may play a bigger role than we think. I think they may play a bigger role than we have seen in the last number of elections. That would be my prediction.

VK: I want to circle back and then get your response to that, but, Kathleen, what do you think the big issue is?

KM: I am going to say a bunch of things that are important, but I do not think are going to be the issue.

Climate has already been mentioned. We know that for millennials, it is one of the top two issues.

For the general population, it generally comes in the top five for about 40% of the population. Then, there are issues that Amanda just pointed out, the values, the identity-based issues. We saw a campaign recently in Alberta run largely on those identity issues. It was not successful, unfortunately. Listen that was my team.

I was rooting for Rachel Notley. When we brought out some of those real issues around identity politics, LGBTQ issues, white nationalism, it did not resonate with the wider population. Why was that? I think the election debrief still has to happen in that province, but I would argue it goes back to that hierarchy of needs, back to the economy. I think Tim and Amanda are right in terms of it will be an affordability issue. I want to broaden it. Tim has mentioned the economy is on fire. Certainly, we have seen some of the lowest unemployment rates. The Liberals, frankly, have not done a great job, probably because they do not have Amanda on their team working permanently in Ottawa, but selling that narrative, telling people about what they have done for the economy, and that means that people do not know that information, and they do not feel that information. I want to point to one study.

It was out a couple of weeks ago. The CEOs currently, in 2018, made a 7% raise. An average worker has to work 158 years to make the same salary as a CEO makes in one year. It is that disparity that is causing so much anxiety that they do not feel that their children are going to do as well as they are.

Listen, I know the audience I am speaking to. I am speaking to the Empire Club. I know this is not necessarily going to be a popular message that I am coming in with by saying that CEOs need to take a pay cut, and we need to give workers more, but I think it is really important that we start talking about that income and equality issue and talking about ways, in public policy, that we can try to solve it.

VK: I want to circle back to what Amanda brought up, and that is values. We have seen a lot of that. Is abortion, is Michael Cooper and what he said going to sink Andrew Scheer in this election?

TP: It is a winning proposition for the only male on the panel, is it not? Thank you. As a pro-choice male, I had better claim all of that. I do not know if it will sink them, but things like the Michael Cooper incident—for those of you who do not know, Michael Cooper, a Conservative MP was at the justice committee a week or two ago. He read from the manifesto of the New Zealand shooter while interrogating. That would be the right word, a Muslim witness. It was dumb. It was really stupid.

VK: He apologized.

TP: He did apologize. He was trying to be too cute by half.

The Conservatives cannot make those mistakes on an ongoing basis because, unlike the other two parties who have different troubles when it comes to identity and values, the Conservatives are more vulnerable in that area. I do not think the forced-upon abortion debate is going to sink the Conservatives. I think it is a deliberate strategy. Maybe it is not an ill-conceived strategy. It is not borne out fact based on what Scheer said, but it certainly is designed to make women uncomfortable with the Conservative leader. I think he has to be more forceful in constantly recognizing that this is not an issue that should be pursued or will ever be pursued. Frankly, I just wish the Conservatives—and I am speaking personally here—would put this issue to bed and would put the whole issue of marching in Pride parades to bed. We live in 2019, so stop playing footsie with some of the SoCon crap that is out there.

AA: The fact that they cannot put it to bed, the fact that they will not put it to bed will be the reason why people will have to think twice about voting for them, in my mind.

VK: Do you think they will like what Kathleen said?

Do you think that what happened in Alberta can be extrapolated to the rest of the country? If the Liberals push it too much, are people just going to tune out to that stuff and be, like, "Hey, it still matters if life is affordable or not."

AA: No, because I think that there are different issues that happen in our Prairie Provinces, and there are different ways of expressing those issues and a different point of view on those issues. I think one of the habits that we fall into—and we get into some of these Twitter exchanges, which have been really fun lately, but we get into them. I hear a lot from women who say it will not happen here, not in our country; it might be happening south of the border; it might happen to them.

Then, you look at the cover of the Sunday New York Times and 10 of 25 are YouTube stars. Right-wing YouTube stars that are reflected on that cover are Canadian, not American. It is happening here, and it is borderless. It is happening across borders, but I think the messages that resonate in Alberta are very different than messages that resonate elsewhere, particularly, in Ontario and Quebec but also around the country as well. I think that is the reason why we are seeing this debate percolate the way it is. I do not think that it is on fire, but I think it is close. I think when you have 12

Conservative MPs attending an anti-choice rally and the leader not condemning that, women in this country have reason to be hella mad.

TP: You can be mad, and I get not condemning it, but, come on, what happens on YouTube is not a reflection of what is happening in the Conservative Party.

AA: Really?

TP: Really, we are going to start talking about what happens on YouTube is a reflection of that? Scheer has said, Harper has said, and I think what people do not understand, and Mike Van Soelen and others here who have worked in the government would tell you, is if the Conservative Party ever moved to change the current status quo—because we actually should codify the law to allow for abortion—half the Conservative Party would walk away or more.

AA: But 15% of the party shows up at an anti-choice rally—15%.

KM: To be fair, are they not allowed to believe what they believe? If the leader insists that they are not going to legislate on it—I mean, there are people in this country who have different views.

AA: But not as representatives of ridings.

KM: The reality is that Andrew Scheer was elected on the

13th ballot of his leadership ballot. He did not win a resounding majority.

AA: He just beat out Maxime Bernier.

KM: He just squeaked through. He has no coalition of the willing that is behind him. As a result, it is really hard to keep all these people together. He wants to keep on mobilizing his more socially conservative base to volunteer, to donate. He has to keep on feeding red meat to those masses so he has to allow the 12 Conservative MPs to go to those rallies. I think the bigger point here from a strategic point of view is these series of events, and let us roll back the clock a little bit; let us go back to Lynn Beyak. Do we all remember who Lynn Beyak is?

The former Conservative senator who had to be kicked out of caucus. It took about a year for her to be kicked out of caucus for publishing some really heinous letters on her website. That took Andrew Scheer a really long time to do that. Now, we have seen another example where he has not in any way disciplined these MPs who have gone to these rallies. We have seen another example with Michael Cooper where—okay, Michael Cooper, you do not get your seat on the justice committee for another couple of weeks while the House is still sitting, but no real discipline, no ejection out of caucus.

What that shows to me, these series of examples, is a weak leader, someone who is not strong, someone who does not have a command of their caucus or their party.

I think that is the pattern that we have to watch for—that he is not willing to stand up.

VK: Tim wants to jump in, and I am going to move on to a different one.

TP: It was a good one to start with. Look, I will go back and agree with Amanda and Kathleen that these are issues Conservatives have to be careful with, but it is outright farcical. And let me use that word again, 'farcical', to suggest that any of the leadership of the Conservative Party is going to re-open the abortion debate. It is not going to happen in my lifetime or your lifetime.

That is a very, very good thing. However, yes, in the Conservative Party and, hopefully, in other political parties, there are people who do not have one homogenous view on everything. I am not the social conservative.

I think my friends would grant me that. I do not understand social conservatism, and I went to an all-boys Christian Brothers School, so I really should have a good understanding of it. I do not get it. I do not get what they believe in, but I do believe they should have a place and a space to express themselves. I do not believe they have the ability to influence legislation. That is my view, and that is what a Conservative Party will welcome people of different views. Total uniformity on issues is not always a good thing, and shutting down the dialogue or labeling people, or whole parties, because of the view of 12 people is also not helpful in advancing the rational arguments that can be made.

KM: On human rights, I think it is okay, actually. On the matter of human rights and women's rights, I think it is okay.

VK: Speaking of 'big tent', Amanda, was the damage done to the Liberals and the prime minister, specifically through SNC self-inflicted, do you think?

AA: I think, in part, it was, because I think that there was, when we were headed into week 11 talking about it on the show and every major newspaper and broadcaster in the country, it was very evident that the party had had an opportunity, I think, earlier on, to stop the bleed, to stem the bleed, and we did not do that. I think that there was this feeling that a lot of goodwill that had been sewn over many years would prevail and that he would not take the hit that he ultimately ended up taking. I think we relied on that too much, and I certainly think we relied on time too much. What should have happened, in my opinion, is that very early on, there should have been an apology. It should have been quick. It should have come from the heart, which, I think, this leader, in particular, Trudeau can do very well.

I think that he has that capability. I think had he have done that, Canadians would have been open to forgiving some of the things that they found to be an issue as it related to SNC. Damage that was inflicted day after day, week over week, ultimately led to what is now a big slide in the polls and time for us to rally and have to get behind other issues and remind Canadians why they fell for him in the first place.

VK: I will move over to Kathleen. What do you think would need to happen—put yourself in their shoes for a second—in order for him to recapture, for the prime minister to recapture the sentiment that existed prior to that?

KM: First of all, I think that it is natural in a four-year cycle that they would have that dip. They really did not have that dip until 2019, which was amazing, really, largely because, for most of his tenure, he was not facing real leaders. Jagmeet was not elected. It took a while for Scheer to get elected. He is only facing an opposition now. I think there were technical mistakes, like Amanda alluded to. I think they should have gotten out there and followed the comms plan of apologizing, but what they need to do now is they need to focus on women. Liberals traditionally win when they have a 12-point advantage among women, so it is a gender split. Same thing for Obama. Obama, in 2012, I think, won over Romney with about—it was a 12- or 14-point split. They do not have that split now, let me tell you.

AA: Close, close. We are. I think the most recent polls show about 11 points on that front, with women, not with men.

KM: You need a lot more. They need more across the country. The question is, to Vassy's point, was this a hit that was temporary, that some people were upset with what Trudeau and the government did, or actually have people become disillusioned and are now writing them off? The question, in strategic terms, and what we talk about is has their voter universe shrunk from what has happened? Are there less people even willing to consider the Liberals now? That is the biggest question that, if I were in their party, I would be trying to figure out quick.

TP: It was a self-inflicted wound, but here is the equal opportunity or the equal challenge with all of that, as Amanda knows quite well: The Liberals' biggest asset in 2015 was Justin Trudeau. Right now he is their most damaged asset. The different polls showed different things. As we all know, our Abacus poll has the parties tied. Angus Reid has them at a 10-point gap today with the Conservatives ahead. You can guess which one I believe. What the two numbers that really matter are for those who are looking at the prime minister's performance and want a change of direction in the country—there are big gaps there that were not there before. Justin Trudeau, who used to outpace his party is now behind his party. I do not think he is yet a full-on negative to his party, but it puts him in a very different place. That is why you see him, I think—

and, again, Amanda knows him better—potentially overreaching a little bit in his performances: Because he wants to get his fire back in his belly. You have not asked, but, look, I think, and, again, why not throw a hand grenade in here?

VK: Go for it. We are not on air, it is fine.

TP: We are on air, actually. His response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Inquiry and not saying 'genocide', and then saying 'genocide' was an emotional overreach. There is a whole legitimate debate to be had about that word, but I think that was the prime minister who cares about this issue going too far, and creating the climate now where he is, again, being criticized, even by some of his own people, including very well respected people like Irwin Cotler and Roméo Dallaire.

VK: He interestingly, this morning, actually, on Radio-Canada, had a different response and said 'cultural genocide' would be more appropriate. Tim is referring to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry, the finding of which was that what has occurred and is occurring with these women and girls amounts to a genocide. There was a lot of conversation, obviously, as that released, about which leader will call it that. Will the prime minister label it that?

If so, what are the implications? He, at first, did not, for the first day; then he moved on and did call it a genocide. Then, today, ***[he]*** qualified that and said maybe 'cultural genocide' would be more appropriate.

AA: I think something else to consider when you are thinking about where we are in this timeframe between when SNC kicked off in the election: You will recall that we have been in the House where the opposition has taken as many shots and tried to keep this issue alive for as long as possible, and, frankly, did a good job of doing that. Now, we are heading into home team advantage because we are heading into campaign period. What does Trudeau do really, really well? He campaigns really well. He tours really well. When he is on the ground, when he is with people, when he is meeting people in the big town halls, that is his sweet spot. We do have that. I think that is key.

I am not just saying that. It is not just some Liberal spin for you. I really do think that there are leaders who do very, very well in the House, and there are leaders who do very, very well on the road. He is a leader that does well on the road and that happens to work for us, because we are heading there.

VK: Speaking of leaders, the number one question I have received over the past few weeks is: Is this Green thing real? I want to ask you that, Kathleen.

KM: No, no, no.

TP: Yes, yes, yes.

VK: I also have to ask you about Jagmeet Singh. We need your unfiltered take on what he is like as a leader.

TP: Remember, the camera is on now.

KM: Jagmeet does not and did not grow up at 24 Sussex.

He did not grow up cultured and in the whole realm of politics. He has not been elected, like Andrew Scheer since he was 25, literally, 25 years old.

Andrew Scheer has done nothing but work in elected politics. He has a lot to learn. He has a lot, a lot to learn.

VK: That is a really diplomatic way—

TP: Way to dodge, an artful dodge.

KM: I am coming there. It has been a few years at this; I know how to dodge. He has a couple of things going for him. He is really good at retail. Back to the retail thing. He is really good at retail. I think that the press gallery, rightfully, has given him a hard time over a few of his original forays into the media.

They also kind of chide him for his social media use, which they think is too casual or too social for a leader. They have certain expectations of what a leader should do on Instagram and what they should not.

He is putting forth policies I think that will still connect. The advantage, if I can say anything—and Amanda is right—is that once we get into election time, things change, and people perk up, and they start paying attention. That is, hopefully, where Jagmeet will have the opportunity to get some more attention because networks will be required to cover the parties in a more equal way, and, hopefully, he can punch through, because he has not been. If his weakness is one thing, he has not been able to punch through.

Maxime Bernier has been better at punching through, frankly, than Jagmeet has. Today, hopefully, this is some news: They are going to be going on big telecom and getting better rates for cell phones, something directly to appeal at that affordability message to millennials. You might not go over your data overages in this room, but lots of millennials and Gen Xers do that basically within two weeks of their plan. Dealing with those telecoms, New Democrats are reaching back to Jack Layton's brand of taking the fees off ATM machines.

AA: She always does such a good job of the spin. You all do. That was impressive. He has been a disaster. I was going to throw the real grenade out there. It has been a disaster, an absolute plummet in the polls, a very—it feels like a distracted party that has been here and here, a divided party who cannot get behind the leader.

I think, when I say he has been a 'disaster', I do not know that it is all of his own making. I think that the party apparatus has really failed him. I think that they failed putting out a message that is—I do not know if people in this room or people anywhere, frankly, even if you are NDP, know what they stand for, what they are about. While Kathleen is right that we are moving into election time where you can define that and get a little more focused about it, they have given up seated territory, given up so much ground that they needed right now, so that we are headed into a two-party election.

KM: Hurts so much.

AA: I think that is the big challenge is that we are heading into this two-party election.

VK: Let me follow up with Mr. Abacus here. Have they ceded that ground to the Greens, and can the Greens—the big question I keep wondering about and getting asked is— capitalize on what they have seen in an increase in popular support in the polls?

TP: It is a great question because in the past when the Greens have gone up, though they have not been to this level and they have not had—the most interesting part about the Greens right now is not that they are at 12% or 14%; it is that their accessible voter pool is up near 45 or 46, which goes back to this notion of the distemper of the times. PEI and Atlantic Canada will always be my reference point, because it is the best reach in the country—sorry, Toronto.

AA: Tim always does that because he knows there will be at least one in the audience, at least one.

TP: Exactly. They just elected a Green opposition in PEI, which is strong Liberal territory. Whether that bleeds over provincially, I do not know. In Fredericton, there could be a seat that the Greens could win. The Greens' greatest challenge, Vassy, to get to the answer to your question is a matter of do they have the organizational wherewithal? If I were Elizabeth May—and I am not; I am going to stop there; she is a lovely person—I would focus on winning 12 seats, which is a party status in the House. I think if they organized themselves properly, they could. The challenge they have is they still see themselves as a movement. A movement can work at a provincial level focused en masse in a small area as it did in PEI, as it did in New Brunswick.

Yes, I think they could be real this time, but they need to be really strategically smart about where they focus their limited resources.

VK: I want to open up the floor to questions from the audience. There is a microphone, so maybe raise your hand if you have a question.

Q: **Thank you so much for coming. You have not mentioned anything about international or China or whatever. All your focuses so far have been about the women's issues and so on. Can you give me some idea as to what you think the various parties are able to do in terms of foreign affairs, and, if you have time, I would love, Tim, if you could mention some of the potential candidates for a Conservative cabinet if the party was elected?**

TP: Let me start on foreign affairs where you will get the first quick that generally does not tend to dominate federal elections, the one exception, of course, being 1988 in a free trade election. I think where foreign affairs will come in here, and it is a good contrast for the prime minister, will be in terms of whether the prime minister is invoking Donald Trump a lot and, as he will, Doug Ford.

As it relates to China, I think all three parties have a very similar perspective in that nobody really knows what to do, to a significant degree, to move the Chinese off their position. There has been a lot of talk in the last week, with Mr. Mulroney recommending Mr. Chretien, which in and of itself is historically fascinating—two sworn enemies, one advocating for the other. Whether the prime minister will do that or not is another matter.

You have had David Mulroney, the former ambassador say that would be ceding too much to that.

VK: Mr. Chretien did say he is willing to go.

TM: Yes, he is willing to go. I think we all do not know how to deal with China—my last point—but we had better figure it out because China and its ambitions are real, and they are definite, and they are forcing their hand very strategically all over the place. One very quick story, which my team, our team here knows: We did a panel on China before, and I had offered a small critique of the government. The very next day, Chris Hall was also on with us and offered a similar critique. We got a note from China Global Television. Will we go on and repeat that? The Chinese are very aggressive. They were going to pay a lot of money, but I would not do that to Vassy. Anyway, that is my quick take on it.

VK: I take your point. I would further this along.

TM: I could have taken the money?

VK: No, you could not. I take your point that the domestic issues dominate, but I think the foreign issues can be significant. Look at the last election with that devastating story of Alan Kurdi and the Syrian refugees. It actually ended up having a huge impact on voter sentiment. Events can influence what happens in the election. The China question is one. We know, for example, that Meng

Wanzhou, that extradition hearing, will not happen until early 2020. That issue will persist in some capacity.

TM: It will not be about extradition; it will be about economy. Why is the government not too exercised about what is happening now? Because it focuses on pork.
The ban is on pork. That is mostly in the west.

VK: Canola.

TM: And canola. Again, my colleagues have heard me say this. If the Chinese go after fish in the east, it will be a very different story, because the east is dominated by Liberal MPs, including some very powerful Liberal MPs whose very electoral futures will be hanging on what happens with the various fishing industries on the east coast.

VK: A quick comment from you, Amanda.

AA: I agree. I do not think China is going to be a defining issue in this election—like foreign affairs is normally not. But I do agree with something you said right off the top, and that is that there are some natural villains, if you will, that certainly if 2015 was the sunny ways election for the Trudeau Liberals, I think we will see a shift in that. I think.

KM: Or we already have.

AA: Or maybe we have already.

TP: The forces of darkness are at the door.

AA: It is a little bit of an allowance for the Liberals to contrast in ways that they had not in 2015. There are some natural villains or natural opponents to take on, Donald Trump being the most obvious, but certainly using aspects of his personality to weigh in to people like Doug Ford, Jason Kenney works really well for Trudeau in making those contrasts and also making those linkages to Scheer.

How much does Scheer look like, act like those people? What is at risk? What is at stake? I think those contrasts tend to work well for people. If you are an Ontarian and you are watching what is happening with the Conservative cuts, things that you really care about, like education, libraries and breakfast program, God forbid, those are things that people get.

When you talk about affordability being a really important issue, and you are able to contrast it with what is at stake, that can be an extremely powerful combination, especially, if you are sitting in that nice middle like the Liberals do.

KM: On foreign affairs, I do not think that the China stuff gets resolved until Trump decides what he wants to do.

Right now, we have no ambassador there. They have no ambassador, or the ambassador is about to exit from

China from Canada. What we have seen the government doing is trying to make deals with Japan, doing the things—they are staying longer in the House, potentially. Actually, the minister is here. We could ask her. Maybe somewhere.

VK: She had to go.

KM: Are they really going to stay until July, to ramp through the NAFTA 2.0 deal because they see that as one of their economic and foreign affairs priorities that they have taken over since 2017, since Trump came in? I think people ultimately vote on that hierarchy of needs, and that is often closer to home.

VK: Really quickly, who is the Minister of Finance?

TP: It will not be Pierre Poilievre. How is that? I do not know.

KM: Let us bet on that. A bottle of wine.

TP: I will bet you a Raptors ticket tonight, if I had one.

I do not. I do not know who will be the minister of finance. It will not be the critic.

AA: Bill Morneau.

VK: Amanda just said Bill Morneau.

TP: Clever, clever.

VK: Let us take another question from the audience.

Q: I want to address three items. One, you talked about the election, and, just to remind you, 30% did not vote; 68% voted; and 61% voted against our current party. On the issue of disparity, I wanted to mention that I am a chief in the un-surrendered Aboriginals and what happens in the un-surrendered Aboriginals is that you have two kinds of Indians. You have Indians that are surrendered, like Perry Bellegarde. They are ceded, and they are under the Indian Act and want to get out from under it; *[they have]* been on the funding payroll for 150 years, and they only got $21 billion from this current government. On the other side, there are the Métis that are 30 million strong all across North America, and they got absolutely nothing.

When Lynn Beyak, the senator, was talking about Natives that made a difference, she was talking about the Métis trying to find examples in the surrendered Nation. Of course, there were none. Whereas, our current parliament buildings are being listed because of a Métis chief that decided that we need to protect our parliament building, and thousands of buildings across the world have been protected in those areas. My question is when we raise the question, the current government bulldozed our tribal offices, bulldozed our land.

When we took them to court, the court said, "Look, you are charging with terrorism, ten days at court." The judge said, "I am going to give you a reserved decision. It will be released on October 21st." When it came on October 21st, at nine o'clock, it was delayed four hours for the AG to get there. They did exactly the opposite to what they did at SNC.

My question is about disparity; I think that is going to be the key in the next election. What do you think? I think the key is going to be to get the people that did not vote last year to do it. I question whether if the government is going to deny certain Canadians water, is that genocide in the current day?

TP: Let me take a crack at that, only because I have an extensive background in Indigenous affairs. I worked in the department. I have done two academic research degrees on it and have done work with the Métis people. Let me start with the current government. I think the intentions of the current government have been good and legitimate. I think where the current government has had challenges—and I think the prime minister has recognized this himself—is in the expectations that so many of the things you have just alluded to can be dealt with in a four-year period. They cannot be. As it relates to Métis, funding arrangements have changed with the Métis people. As you know, there is now an educational funding arrangement with the Métis that exists in Manitoba and elsewhere. I am familiar with the Labrador Métis. They are in the process of signing an agreement on land claims benefits and the opportunity to take advantage of the resources in the east. I do not think you can call what happened—and again, I have written a lot on this, so I am happy to defend it—a 'genocide' to our Indigenous people. It was horrific. It was ill-considered, but a genocide in the truest terms—I would dispute all of that. I think what has happened that is good for all Indigenous people, Métis included, is that for good or for bad, no resource development in this country—and I think it is actually good—happens without the consideration, input and oversight of Indigenous peoples. We are never going to fix the history. We are never going to get it right, but we are doing better, and no one party is good at this. We all need more to do, have more to do here.

AA: Well said.

VK: Do you want to quickly answer? And then we will take some more questions.

KM: I just want to pick up on the thread, because he addressed the Indigenous issue, but I want to pick up the thread on the engagement issue about voter turnout that you raised. I have a friend, Tania Cameron, who does Aboriginal "Rock the Vote" up in Northern Ontario. What we did see in the last election, I think, is important. It was like a 57% turnout between that group, between 18 and 24. That was a record high. Will we see that again? We joked on this panel before that they all came out because they all wanted marijuana to get through. What will drive those people to the polls again? I do think that it is important that we try to raise increased turnout in any way we can, increase civic literacy in our schools among even pre-vote age students.

VK: I want to take another question. We have time for a few more.

Q: Hi, thank you. With the rise in social media, advertising is driving election messaging. And with the recent Facebook announcement on how they are going to implement the new regulations and all that, do you think these regulations or these online databases for election ads will make a difference, or is this just a drop in the bucket in terms of controlling and bringing visibility to the way that social media is being used to push political messaging?

VK: Good strategy.

AA: I missed that.

KM: Good question.

VK: Basically, is what Facebook announcing actually going to mitigate any of the concerns around what they use the data for, or is this just a drop in the bucket?

KM: I have just studied C-76 pretty extensively, which is the new election law that came in December.

What I would say is this: Certainly Facebook, the whole fan group, needs to be regulated more so.

I think that some of the things that Facebook is moving towards is good, but there is so much more that needs to be done because, frankly, we can always figure out a way around it. Right now, there are two regulatory periods pre-election. There is one that begins on June 30th and one that begins when the writ is dropped. While it certainly lowers the amount of money that can be spent during those times, it does not do anything in between electoral periods, and there are ways that people can work around that. I think that—and going back to the last answer to the gentleman before you—it all depends on civic literacy and actually understanding and teaching our students and adults, for that matter, what disinformation is and how to look through that.

I sit on the board of a group called CIVIX, which does the Student Vote project and does democracy boot camps for teachers all across Canada.

One of the things they are trying to do is how to teach people how to understand what misinformation is and how to go through a website and understand if it is true or not. That is a literacy skill, frankly, that we can all use.

VK: Amanda, do you want to weigh in?

AA: I agree. I do not think it is enough. I think that we will be bombarded with third-party messages. I think that it is very difficult to delineate between what is an actual paid message by a party and what is the third party. How is the third party connected, especially, when we see—I am sorry to call out the Conservative Party, again—the Conservative Party putting so much effort and emphasis into their own channels and their own ability to disseminate news their way? I think that that is a massive challenge for the voter, for a, frankly, somewhat uneducated voter who may only be paying attention when it is election period. I think that because of Donald Trump, we have gotten into this place where there is the idea of fake news. Our real news agencies and broadcasters somehow broadcasting fake news is also a problem because people really do not know what to believe, where the source of real and good information is. I think it is really important for people to go back to the sites of each of these parties to understand what these platforms are because we will be hurling and throwing so many balls, and a lot of it is going to be BS, and people have to find a way to sift through that to get to the core.

TP: Yes, you are never going to regulate at mean-spiritedness or moronic behaviour. Turn Twitter on at any moment of the day, and you get plenty of that no matter what the regulations are.

AA: Totally.

TP: The other challenge you have is less the vehicle and more the political culture. We now have a more refined political culture where all parties engage in very demarcated attacks, and you are training young people to do this, so they do not have the ability to impose a little bit of humanity in the conversation. It is, "You are right, or you are wrong." There is nothing in between. All politicians—last point I will make—are encouraged by their political leadership to use social media because, whether it is true or not, they assume they can have direct voter contact. I am a big fan of hers—Catherine McKenna. Catherine got herself in trouble most recently for doing a video in a bar in Newfoundland with Mark Critch, where she said, "What I learned is if you talk the loudest, you get heard."

She is actually right in saying that, but that became a condemnation of "Look, what a twisted way of doing politics." Just shut down your social media and turn off your Twitter.

AA: I think we also all predict the ugliest and nastiest election campaign.

KM: We can do something. People have been saying that every election.

AA: We can.

TP: Yes, we can.

KM: I have been on this for the last six months, and it is going to be the worst, ugliest campaign ever in the history of Canada.

AA: It will be. It is going to be.

KM: Let us try to change that. Everybody raise your hand right now. Raise your hand.

KM: Let us just commit. Let us just commit.

VK: I have time for one more really quick question, if there is another one.

Q: No one has mentioned anything about health policy, national pharmacare, drug pricing, rare disease, all this stuff happening on policy. Is any of this resonating at all with the electorate?

VK: Your question is music to Kathleen's ears.

KM: Yes, there is my lifeline.

TP: Set aside an hour for the answer.

VK: We have two minutes to answer this.

KM: Yes, there is effort to build a pharmacare plan for Canadians for a number of years. Free birth control in 2020 if you vote for a New Democratic government, for every woman. That will help our economy; it will help half of the population.

VK: Not to interrupt, though, but his question is also does it resonate? Are people going to be voting on health care?

KM: It is the same like childcare. Childcare is an infrastructure program. It is an economic program. People have been railing in social democratic circles for affordable, accessible, public childcare for years. Do we have it?

No. Every time someone comes forward with it, it becomes the pox on the party and does not work. I am not sure. I think people do crave it. Pharmacare has shown to not only save money for governments, but help increase productivity and also help people who cannot afford their meds in terms of an affordability issue. It does not look like the Liberals are going to bring something in. They have got their blue-ribbon panel that has made some recommendations.

AA: Oh, just wait.

VK: They have Eric Hoskins, the former health minister, here in Ontario, who is about to, any moment now, deliver his final report, but, like Kathleen says, we do not know if that will be an actual pharmacare program or a hybrid. They have certainly been telegraphing that it will not be the full deal. Amanda, quick answer on health issues? What is it going to be?

AA: Well, news right here. No. I think, to Kathleen's point, it is an issue. It is always an issue. It is never the number one issue. I think the Liberals will unveil something that is bigger than maybe what people are expecting.

Will it go all the way? Will it satisfy New Democrats' desires on that front? No, I do not think so.
I think it is unfortunate because, when you take your federal lens and look provincially at what is happening and the erosion of some of our health care institutions, provincially, there are concerns that should actually be lifted up, so that federally we are taking a more responsive approach to how we are addressing health care and how we are guiding and leading it.

To be honest, I do not see it being even in the top three or four issues.

TP: I was just going to say railing on health care is a social democratic breakfast theme, a breakfast issue.

We would hear it all day, but it is an important issue, I would say.

KM: Tommy, health care, would not be without a New Democrat.

TP: I know, MCP. I actually did a presentation to a health care group yesterday with fresh data that we had.

Health care is number eight in terms of ranking of issues, way behind the economy. When people are asked what they think should be the focus of investment in health care, it will not surprise you that first it is more doctors; second, it is more nurses; third, it is wait time. There is not a lot of sophistication or easy politics there for political leaders.

VK: Thanks, guys.

KE: Our lead sponsor today, Takeda, I would like to thank you for sponsoring. Again, I would like to welcome Rebecca Yu, Vice President of Market Access and External Affairs from Takeda to give our thank you, today.

Note of Appreciation, by Ms. Rebecca Yu, Vice President, Market Access and External Affairs, Takeda

Thank you, Kent. On behalf of Takeda Canada, I want to thank the panel for a really lively, exciting discussion. I really enjoyed it. I will remember to tune in at 5 to 7 p.m. daily on CBC News Network—Wednesdays, especially. As the Canadian affiliate of a top-ten innovative biopharmaceutical company, Takeda Canada appreciates the opportunity to sponsor today's event. Founded in Japan 238 years ago, Takeda's mission is to deliver better health and brighter futures for patients through life-changing medicines. Health care almost always ranks as a top issue for Canadian voters at election time, but, as we discussed, it often does not get a lot of attention in the actual campaigns. It will be interesting to see if national pharmacare emerges as an important campaign issue this October. Takeda believes that any move toward national pharmacare should be made with the goal of expanding access to medicines and reducing coverage gaps for all Canadian patients, not by rationing care or achieving equity by offering less coverage for medicines that patients need.

Thanks, again, to the Empire Club of Canada for the opportunity for Takeda Canada to support this forum. Special thanks to Vassy and the panel for a thought-provoking and entertaining discussion. I just want to end to say regardless of what party and what colour you are in, we are going to say one thing, tonight, which is "Go Raptors!"

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

A few quick announcements. I want to recognize a gentleman here who will be the next president of the Empire Club starting in July: Mr. Mike Van Soelen. He is going to take over and succeed me in all kinds of ways. Thank you.

A couple more recognitions. I know Minister Ng was here. I think she might have departed, but the Minister of Small Business and Export was here. Gordon McIvor—I just want to thank a gentleman here who has helped me very much through this season. We are about to launch our 39th event, so it has been very busy, but he has been there as a sounding board, and it has been very helpful. I want to thank you, Gordon for that. Thank you.

I also want to recognize the gentleman who has spoken here, but Tony van Straubenzee of all the presidents of the Empire Club in the last 115 years—and no, we are not as old as Takeda—probably had the most prestigious year, because he had both Audrey Hepburn and Ronald Reagan in the same year, amongst other people. He was known for bringing the most prestigious folks here for all the years.

Then, something came up in the talk today. We are having a discussion on hate this Thursday, for any of you who can come out.

There are a few tickets left. It is an important discussion to have with all of the things that have been happening in Toronto over the last couple of years on the Internet. It is a difficult discussion, and we are going to have it here.

We have an academic; we have Bernie Farber from the Anti-Hate Network; we have Mohamad Fakih, who just won a lawsuit against a gentleman who had been victimizing him online, for $2.5 million. I am not going to be giving the introduction. I am asking Mohamad to give the introduction. It is going to be a great event on Thursday, for any of you who could attend.

We will also have an event on June 13th with Minister Ng. It is an evening event. It is called "Women Who Build." It will be a tremendous event. Finally, we will have the Health Minister of Canada on June 24th. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

THE RISE OF WHITE SUPREMACY IN CANADA

WITH GLOBAL NEWS', FARAH NASSER & DR. MOHAMAD FAKIH

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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June 13, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the One King West Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present Canada's top experts in the field of hate and extremism, research to explain the unparalleled growth of hate groups and what Canadians can do about it.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Dr. Mohamad Fakih, President and Chief Executive Officer, Paramount Fine Foods; Voice of UNHCR Canada

Mr. Bernie Farber, Chairman, Canadian Anti-Hate Network
Mr. Mustafa Farooq, Executive Director, National Council of Canadian Muslims
Ms. Farah Nasser, News Anchor, Global News
Dr. Barbara Perry, Professor, Ontario Tech University

Guests:

Mr. Giancarlo Drennan, Principal, Maple Leaf Strategies Inc.
Mr. Michael Kobzar, Director, Energy Management, Ontario, Siemens Canada; First Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. MJ Perry, Vice President and Owner, Mr. Discount Ltd.; PhD Candidate in Theology (University of Toronto); Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Michael Thompson, Councillor for Ward 21 (Scarborough Centre) and Deputy Mayor, City of Toronto

Ms. Cara Zwibel, Director, Fundamental Freedoms Program, Canadian Civil Liberties Association

The Empire Club of Canada in its past 115 years has addressed nearly every national and international issue of the day. In its rich history, however, it has never addressed the issue of white nationalism until today. Unfortunately, you may not be surprised to learn that in having a record of every speech delivered, we have found speeches in our archives in the early days that have exhibited a type of thinking that, frankly, is unimaginable today, thinking that was prevalent at the beginning of the last century and that was, more specifically, demonstrated by early British Canadians with views on how the Anglo-Saxons all need to sit together or how misplaced the suffragettes were and other similar viewpoints.

Thankfully, times have moved on and the Empire Club itself has striven to be a modern, diverse, and inclusive organization, and the speeches delivered at our podium have reflected changing attitudes of society.

However, that does not mean there are no longer persistent or salient societal issues that need to be addressed. Part of the Empire Club's rich history is its willingness to have important and, at times, difficult conversations at our podium.

That is why we are here today to talk about white nationalism: Because the experts say it is on the rise, and statistics show that hate crime is on the rise as well. President Donald Trump agrees with none of what I just said, stating that the problem with white nationalism is caused by "a small group of people that have very, very serious problems." If you are here today, I doubt you believe that. If you are watching our podcast, I doubt you believe that. Bernie ***[Farber]***, do you believe that?

BF: Not even a little bit.

KE: Bernie does not believe that. There is a division between public perception in terms of whether this is a serious issue in Canada. There are people who believe this is just an American problem. Our panel will address that today. We know that the Internet and social media have provided new tools, connectivity, and anonymity to those interested in spreading hate speech.

I would think what people want to know is what is causing this increase. Where does it lurk and how do you stop it? In my life, I have a son and a new baby girl. This is Alice, all six pounds and two ounces of her. She was born just a few weeks ago. When she is old enough, the conversation I want to be having with her is, "Alice, in this world, everyone is treated equally. All you have got to do is work hard, and that is your advantage in life, but it is your ability to work harder." The reality is the world is not quite that place. Alice Emerson will not experience the life as a target of certain types of hate. I have experienced things in my life. I realized that there are many parents who have had and will have to have more difficult conversations than I will. In terms of today's introduction, I thought it was more appropriate to turn it over to someone who had relevant experiences, and that is Dr. Mohamad Fakih. Many of you know his story about having approached a nearly bankrupt restaurant and transformed it into one of the fastest-growing chains in North America.

Many of you would also be aware of his dedication to helping others. I have known Dr. Fakih for a little while. When he was not a big shot, he was very interested in asking how your family is doing; how things are with you; and what is going on in your life.

Now that he is a big shot, he is still asking: How are you doing? How is your family? He is a very lovely man, and he has always taken time for me.

He is a community leader and a citizen supporting multiple causes and organizations, including the Canadian Cancer Society, Islamic Relief Worldwide, the Hospital for Sick Children, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and a whole bunch of others—the UN Refugee Agency in Canada. Both Paramount and Mohamad have donated generously to these charities and other nonprofit organizations. He has also started a nonprofit organization himself called the Fakih Foundation that ensures underserved communities and at-risk populations are motivated and empowered for entrepreneurship, leadership, diversity and inclusion.

In the past three years, after the Canadian government decided to welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees, Dr. Fakih made headlines in Canadian news when he travelled to Lebanon to visit the Islamic Relief camps for Syrian refugees to gain a deeper understanding of current relief efforts. He has won a tremendous amount of awards.

If I listed them all, I would be here all day: the 2014 Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award; the Globe and Mail titled Dr. Fakih one of Toronto's "16 to watch in 2016." He was named among the 50 Most Influential People in 2017 by Toronto Life. He got an honorary doctorate from Ryerson in 2018. Dr. Fakih represents the very example of what Canada should want new Canadians to be, the very example of that.

Yet he has been exposed to racism, Islamophobia, unfair impediments in traveling across borders, and more.

I will leave it to him to describe his experience and to have the honour of introducing today's panel.

Please, welcome philanthropist, activist, community leader, founder of the Fakih Foundation and CEO of Paramount Fine Foods, Dr. Mohamad Fakih.

The Rise of White Supremacy in Canada with Ms. Farah Nasser and Dr. Mohamed Fakih

DMF: Thank you Kent. I was just whispering to Kent, and I said, "I am very proud of you." I did.

Good afternoon. I feel really honoured to be here today. Just like you, I look forward to learning from the impressive people that will be speaking after me on the panel. I am not an expert. My experience with hate is not academic. It is personal. I will tell you about the most prominent example, the one you may have read about in the news.

Some of you may have already heard me talking about it, but I would be talking about it very often because we need to have more and more conversations like this. Kevin Johnston is a guy who runs a hate speech website. He made me his favourite target, calling me a 'terrorist', calling me a 'jihadist'. He made videos outside my restaurant and said that you are only allowed my restaurant if you have raped your wife or someone else's wife so many times. He said that inside my restaurant everyone inside is up to something nefarious. Now, my English is good, but I had to Google that one. I have an accent, but I like it. I want to keep that one, too. At first, I was, like, "Buddy, people are here, and they come to me just to buy Shawarma, relax." I tried to reason with him, but he would pester me, attack me online, follow me and my children around shopping centres. He shouted at me, made my children shake, and my son, Adam—four years old—would wake up three, four times at night asking who that man was who hated his dad. Finally, I decided: "Enough. Enough of this. This is Canada, and you should not be able to get away with this in this country." I sued him for defamation in 2017. Last month, we had the verdict. The judge agreed with me.

She awarded $2.5 million. Of the things that Johnston said about me, she wrote, "a loathsome example of hate speech at its worst, targeting people solely because of their religion." I believe in fighting back, as you know. I think more of us should do that.

The judge wrote in her judgment, "Left unchallenged, hate speech poisons the integrity of our democracy." There are a lot of reasons why immigrants and minorities do not stand up for themselves.

A lot of people call me and tell me, and did call me and say, "Let it go. You have a lot to lose, and he does not have anything to lose. Why do you do it? Why do you get yourself involved?" None of them realize that I would have had lost myself if I let it go. If I did not fight back, I would have had lost the respect of my family and my children and, most importantly, I would not have realized again, and found myself the person I wanted to be. Some immigrants and newcomers do not have the money for a legal fight.

Some do not think they will get a fair shake in the court system. Some newcomers do not want to be seen as troublemakers in their new country. All immigrants and minorities are appreciative of the opportunity given to them by Canada. When I came here with $1,200, a smile from a Canadian made a difference to me and to my life. A lot of them are afraid to lose that opportunity they were given but when hateful words go unchallenged, it is like an invitation to others, an invitation to come out of the shadows and make them feel safe to announce and even celebrate their intolerance.

There are laws in place to protect all Canadians, those born here and those who have been welcomed here. We should not be shy about putting those laws to work for the greater good. We should proclaim all of us, loudly, that hate speech has no place in Canada.

If you speak hateful words, if you engage in hateful actions against anyone, against Muslims, against the Black people, against Jewish people, just simply against any Canadian, you will be held accountable and, as per the judge, you will pay $2.5 million.

I do not know how much of the judgment I will ever collect. Johnston is not a rich guy, but I will go after him.

No matter how much it is, I will not feed my family with that money. I am going to use that money to financially support others who seek to protect themselves and our Canadian values against people who engage in hate speech. I would like to use that money to organize more events like this and start a call to action to all of you business leaders, in law firms, quite frankly, so that all of us together can talk more about this and start workshops in all companies and in schools where we actually ask the parents to show up.

As well, we should demand more from our political leaders. It is important to keep up the fight, and I will tell you why. The same day that I got the judgment, I could not wait to go back home and wait for my kids at 4 o'clock to arrive with the school bus.

I wanted to read the decision to them. I wanted them to know that I came through with my promise to them. I promised them that that person that scared them in the mall will pay a price. They were happy for me. My wife was happy. That same night that person repeated the video of my children in the mall to upset me and to anger my family. He actually made another video and said worse things about me and my family and about my community and just the fact that I am Muslim. I acted like it is all good. I was smiling because I did not want my family to lose that celebration moment that they waited for, for two years. But before

I went to bed I was sitting alone, and I realized I only won one battle, but the fight and the war will go on.

The fight will go on for all of us Canadians if we do not stand up against hate. Sometimes when I get upset I go to my computer. I go to YouTube, and I go start listening and reading the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. To me, King's words are a reminder that it is not enough to remain silent in the condemnation of hate. To win against hate, we are going to need a loud voice and a firm spine, someone to defend us, but we need to keep this country warm and welcoming.

The hate we hear today is a challenge to our way of living, but it is also a chance for our country, an opportunity to stand up for what is right and what is good. In that face of intolerance we can come together.

In the face of hate, we can love. While other countries build walls and close themselves to the world, we can open our doors wider. We do not often speak of the 'Canadian dream'. Even when I was a kid in Lebanon everybody spoke about the American dream.

We should often speak about the Canadian dream. What should be our Canadian dream? It should be a dream for us all, not only for ourselves. It should recognize that Canada works best when its people work together in community and respect. It should recognize that we stand together in good times and bad, that we speak together in opposition to hate and to those who try to divide us. It should recognize that when we join together, all of us together, like today, there is a table where we partner such that half are Jewish and the other half are Muslim young people who come to listen to this. When we join in building a country where intolerance is pushed to the farthest fringes and shouted down each and every time it raises its voice, there will always be people who hate from their bones, but together, all of us together we can make them smaller in numbers, smaller in influence, smaller and smaller until they disappear. This is my Canadian dream, and I hope it is yours. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Kent and his team, and even One King and the team that served the food and everyone while the Empire Club has taken a leadership role by hosting something like this to talk about anti-hate. Let us altogether send a message right here from this place, One King, from the entire club of Canada, frankly, all of Canada, let us try to send the message.

I am going to ask you all to join me to stand up. Let us send a message right here from One King that all of us Canadians stand up against hate. Thank you.

Before I introduce the panel, I wanted to say something very, very important to all of you. Let's go Raptors! I promise, I found it in my car because of my kids. Now, I cannot wait to introduce the panel.

Half of the panelists were with me on another panel three days ago. We are going to end up repeating ourselves today. Our first panelist's career spans for more than a quarter century and is focused on human rights, pluralism and inter-ethnic/faith/race relations.

A former CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress and the Mosaic Institute, he is recognized and called upon by the courts, media and law enforcement as an expert in human and civil rights. He is one of the few in the field to be accepted by Canadian courts as an expert in hate crime, white supremacy and anti-racism.
He is Chair of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network and sits as a board member of Human Rights Watch.

He has been recognized by Canada for his human rights work having been awarded the Canada 125 Medal, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Sovereign's Medal as well as the special commendation award from the Venerable Order of St. John.

He writes for newspapers and magazines and is a sought-after speaker appearing regularly on television, radio and podcasts, and I am proud to call him my friend. Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome and help me welcoming my friend and Chairman of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, Bernie Farber, to the stage. Our next guest is a lawyer by profession.

Mustafa Farooq completed his Juris Doctor at the University of Alberta and Osgoode Hall and later earned his Master of Laws at University of California, Berkeley. He previously served as a senior political staffer to a provincial cabinet minister in which role he worked on various legislative and policy initiatives.

Mustafa was also a visiting scholar at Osgoode Hall Law School researching countering violent extremism policy in Canada. His book entitled Law, Politics, and Countering Violent Extremism is forthcoming.

He is a published writer and commentator in various news media and publications on issues related to Canadian Muslims, human rights and civil liberties and public policy issues including Islamophobia and national security. Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome Mustafa Farooq, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Council of Canadian Muslims, to the stage. Thank you.

Barbara Perry is a professor, and I just met her two days ago; we were on a panel together; she is a Director of the Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism.

She has written extensively on social justice generally and hate crime, specifically. She has published several books spanning both areas, including Diversity, Crime and Justice in Canada and In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crime. She has also has published in the area of Native American victimization and social control. Dr. Perry continues to work in the area of hate crime and has begun to make contributions to the limited scholarship on hate crime in Canada. She is regularly called upon by local, national and international media as an expert on hate crime and right-wing extremism. Her community work was recognized in 2018 with the Ontario Leading Women, Building Communities Award and was recognized in 2019 by the City of Oshawa for her volunteerism.

Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome Professor in the Faculty of Social Science at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Dr. Barbara Perry.

Last but not least, finally, today's moderator is one of Toronto's most recognizable faces in news, and I am very, very proud of her. Farah Nasser is an award-winning journalist, bringing extensive experience to her role as anchor on Global News at 5:30 and at 6:30. Nasser's status as a trusted journalist with a strong political background, having covered elections at every government level, has earned her the opportunity to moderate key political debates, including the main 2018 Ontario provincial election debate and the only broadcast 2018 Toronto mayoral debate.

Providing viewers across the GTA much needed clarity for nearly two decades, she was on the ground reporting during major events such as the Toronto van attack, the 2010 G20 Toronto Summit and the Toronto 18 terror trial. Nasser began her career with Rogers

TV before accepting a position with Newstalk 1010, where she worked her way up to a reporting role.

When not reporting on the day's headlines of Global News—and I know this for a fact—Nasser is always spending her time volunteering in the community.

Ladies and gentlemen, please, welcome News Anchor for Global News, Farah Nasser. Thank you.

FN: Thank you, Mohamad, for that kind introduction for all of us. Thank you all for being here and a special thank you to the Empire Club, because I know you mentioned this is the first time the Empire Club is doing a discussion like this. I really feel like in a public forum like this—we were talking about this—this is possibly the first time this topic is being broached with leaders from our country. Unfortunately, I do not think it is going to be the last time we are talking about this, but it certainly is the first time, and thank you for making that happen. I think it is so important.

FN: I think we should begin today by talking about the elephant in the room, which is that there are people, possibly in this room, but I know certainly in other rooms that believe this is not an issue here, that this is an American problem. Certainly, it seems, for me covering the news, that this is no longer relegated to the margins of society. Barbara Perry, you are an expert in this field. You know very well. Set a baseline for us and explain this phenomenon. If we could start that way.

BP: I think what I would like to do is set the context in terms of what are the manifestations, how we know that there is a rise in white nationalism or white supremacy, far-right activism, if you will. I think there are a number of indicators of that. One of the most recent, I think, signs of that are the data that came out from StatCan over the last year, which looks at police-reported hate crimes, for which we found there is a 47% increase in the number of police-reported hate crimes from 2016 to 2017. That is unprecedented to have that kind of increase in any category of crime.

I would argue if it was any category of crime, we would have been calling it a crisis. We would have been demanding national inquiries. What is happening here? We have not really been very active around this. I think that is really telling. We have the hate crime data. The other thing is the increasing presence and visibility and the vocal nature of the organized hate movement, so I am referring to white nationalist groups, white supremacist groups, those sorts of things. When we published our first study, The Far-Right in Canada, we identified just about 100 active groups across the country, and we are now in the second stage of that research, and, already, just four years later, we are estimating well over 200—the number is probably approaching 300—active groups across the country. I think that those two figures together are enough. Maybe the last thing to mention, which sort of links them, is if we think about the number of homicides, simply the number of mass murders in the last four or five years, what do you think? A couple? Three? Four? Nineteen homicides are attributable to some strand of right-wing extremism. Justin Bourque killed three RCMP officers in Moncton, inspired by his own online radicalization, if you will, reading right-wing websites. We had Alexandre Bissonnette who killed six Muslim men at prayer inspired by Islamophobia, inspired by Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen.

Then, more recently, of course, Alek Minassian, who took ten lives in Toronto in his van attack, was inspired by misogyny associated with the incel movement, which is part of the far-right as well. If these are not reasons to take seriously the threat, I do not know what more evidence we can possibly share.

FN: Can I just add to that. In the last municipal election, as well, we saw in Toronto here, a white nationalist and neo-Nazi enabler, as you have said, Bernie, and in Mississauga, we had the same man who was in a lawsuit with Mohamad Fakih, a vile Islamophobe and anti-immigrant agitator and together they got 50,000 votes. Fifty thousand votes in the GTA; 50,000 people have voted for hate mongers. It is not even an issue, in terms of geography; the most diverse place where diversity is our strength, this is what is happening.

Bernie, I am going to turn it over to you, because you are the one who pointed that out to me. You have been monitoring; you have been confronting; and you have been dealing with hate groups and white supremacist groups for much of your career. You were at the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Paloma Foundation, the Mosaic Institute. Now, you are the Chair of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network. How did your journey bring you here? What was your journey, I guess, in getting to this point, and what lessons have you learned along the way?

BF: The journey really started with my father, who was a Holocaust survivor in a small village in Poland—750 Jews. He was the only Jew to have survived the war.

His first wife, two children, seven brothers and sisters, the entire village of Jews was murdered in the gas chambers of Treblinka. He survived, and he came here to start a new life. It was his words, really, that I think inspired me from that day forward to understand that hatred is alive and silence feeds hatred and that it is important to always speak out, as Mohamad quite eloquently said. My journey took me through to the Canadian Jewish Congress where I figured one of the things that we really have to do is defend our own community and by defending our own community, we also defend others. We are going back to the ‘80s and ‘90s with the first rise of neo-Nazism through what was known then as a group called the Heritage Front. Some of you may remember them. They used to be called the “Canadian Nazi Party,” but they got a little bit smarter, and they decided, well, we cannot call ourselves Nazis anymore, and they picked up the term ‘Heritage Front’. ‘Heritage’, what is wrong with ‘Heritage’?

Of course, we cottoned on to it in the end, but the fact of the matter is that it never went away. It was put down; it bubbled on the surface for a while; and we have seen this happen time and again from post-World War II. It almost goes like this, peaks and valley, peaks and valleys. Today, we are in the situation that I do not think I have ever seen before, to be quite honest.

I am very worried. I am very concerned. Barbara went over the number of murders. That, to me, shows that there is a clear and present danger. Let me add one thing just to give you another perspective.

When people ask me, How bad is it, really? the fact of the matter is that the Canadian Forces Intelligence Group came out with a study just a few weeks ago—this was from our own Canadian Armed Forces—in which they identified that between 2013 and 2018, there were 53 active members of neo-Nazi organizations in the Canadian military. At this time, as we are speaking right here, there remains 33 active members of some of the most violent neo-Nazi organizations in the world, groups like Atomwaffen, classified as a domestic terrorist organization in the United States; III%ers; and the Proud Boys. They are serving in the Canadian Armed Forces. They are getting arms training. They are learning how to make bombs.

We have implored the Canadian Armed Forces to do something. Get rid of them; take them out of service. All we have been faced with is silence, so, today, I am calling upon the defense minister to take action; get rid of these 30 before something terrible happens. I hope you are with me on that because this is huge and this is important.

FN: The government certainly has to answer for that.

BF: Absolutely.

FN: Mustafa, I want to turn it over to you, because we talked about StatCan. Barbara Perry, we have never seen, in modern history, hate crimes against the Muslim community like we have seen in modern history.

These are reported hate crimes, because most hate crimes, remember, are not even reported—Muslim men, women, children, targeted with violence, even death. How did we get to this point, and how do we confront this ugly reality, Mustafa?

MF: Thank you for your question. I think it is important to note that there is still a large amount—maybe this is the academic in me—of research that needs to be done to fully account for the rise of the public-facing nature of many of these groups. I generally agree with Bernie that this sentiment never went away but really went underground.

To understand how these groups continue to articulate themselves more publicly, to be more active, to organize, to militarize, I think there is a lot more research that is required and that is something that Dr. Perry has been paving the way forward on.

I think, in terms of understanding that, I think we can think about factors like the rise of populist movements, to the south and how that has influenced Canadian politics. We can think about a real network of folks who are invested in Islamophobia and other forms of racism and white supremacy across North America and Europe. There are a number of potential factors. Just to sort of double on the points raised by Bernie and Barbara already, I think it is so critical to understand that the problem of white supremacy is a problem that is affecting people every single day in their lived realities. Let me put that more precisely.

I was on a plane the other day to Edmonton, and we got a call from the Quebec City Mosque, which as you all know, was the site where the largest attack against any religious minority in Canada took place, and during this phone call, we learned that there was an individual who came to the mosque and assaulted one of the mosque goers. While assaulting him, he called out a number of anti-immigrant and Islamophobic sentiments, and asked everyone to show him their passports. When we asked the premier of Quebec to stand up, to stand against a discourse of intolerance, a discourse of division, his response was, "What discourse of divide, what discourse of division?" And he specifically noted that they were not going to add, necessarily, more police protection for the mosque, as if things are fine and as if to say, "What are we really going to do about racism?" It was sort of a shrugging-of-the-shoulders kind of response. When you have people at the very top sort of shrugging their shoulders in response to this kind of racist, white supremacist violence, that is when things get very concerning for us all across Canada.

FN: It has to be more than lip service. Let us talk about, specifically, the tools and also whether police have the tools that they need. I will open up to all three of you.

Do the police have the tools they need to do their job in enforcement and also the justice system?

Are we doing enough? Are we seeing enough in terms of what we are seeing, cases going through the justice system? We heard Mohamad Fakih's, but what is happening in that realm with authorities, Barbara?

BP: We have very limited legislative tools with which to

counter this hate speech and hate crime, in fact.
We do not have a standalone piece of legislation that says, "This is a hate crime." We have sentencing legislation, so if something, an assault, is found to be motivated by bias or prejudice, there might be an opportunity to enhance the sentence after the finding of guilt. It is invoked very rarely.

The only other legislation we have is really propaganda legislation, which is kind of around hate speech and especially those sorts of things like Your Ward News, but between 2010 and 2017, again, I am going to ask you to guess, how many cases do you think? Hundreds, dozens, thousands? Thirty-seven. Keep in mind, that with the dramatic increase we have been seeing, the legislation is not enforced. In part, that is because of hesitancy on the part of the Crown because this is a case, a series of offences that need to go to the Attorney General for permission to lay charges. It is the only offence in the Criminal Code. Police are not well trained in investigative techniques, especially, in smaller services, in smaller cities. In some of the larger cities, like Toronto, York Region, for example, they do have trained personnel.
They do have hate crime units, but that is not the norm. Police are not in a strong position. Crowns are not well trained in building the cases either. Again, we have very few tools. After s. 13 of the Human Rights Code was eliminated, that left us with not even civil remedies for

hate speech, the kind of hate speech that Mohamad was talking about. We are in pretty dire straits in terms of our ability to confront it, legally.

BF: Let me just follow a little bit and give you the example. Barbara mentioned Your Ward News. How many people remember the case of Your Ward News? This was the rag that was distributed here in Toronto, in Oshawa and other places that was probably a prescription, if you will, for what hate crime is. You opened that newspaper, and you thought, "This is the most hateful thing I have ever seen." It was reported by me and a couple of other people in 2010 to Toronto police. The case just finished about three months ago. Now, the man was found guilty.

Mr. Sears was found guilty, and he will be sentenced in the next couple of weeks, but it took close to seven years to move from investigation to settlement. I do not think a homicide takes that long. Keep this in mind. There is also a lot of angst over the whole issue of free speech versus hate speech. And s. 319 of the Criminal Code makes it a criminally indictable offense to knowingly and willfully promote hate against a group identified by race, creed, colour, nationality, sexual orientation. As Barbara said, in order to lay that charge, there is an extra level of protection for which you need the Attorney General's permission to do so. So very often these charges are not laid, because, quite frankly, police just cannot be bothered by that. They do not get it.

Barbara kindly said that there were a few metropolitan police forces that still have hate units. The truth of the matter is there used to be many police forces that had hate units right across Canada. They have all been eliminated. What they do now is they assign two or three individuals within the intelligence unit so that when a hate crime comes along, they get to investigate it. It is not the same as having a specialized group of people who have been specifically trained to deal with this, now, at a time when the rise in hate crimes is so monumental, and, more than that, when it has turned. During my time at the Canadian Jewish Congress, we were dealing with swastikas painted on synagogue walls and slogans, terribly written slogans, "Damn Jews," whatever you want. They were hateful, disgusting words. Today, it has moved from hateful, disgusting words to violence and murder. Violence and murder and 50,000 people in the Greater Toronto Area thought it was quite all right to put an 'X' beside a name of a neo-Nazi enabler to be mayor of their city.

Think about that for a moment. Fifty thousand does not amount to a hill of beans when you are talking about 2.5 million people in Toronto, but to me it amounts to a hill of beans. Why? Because it only takes really one person. It just takes one. Of those 50,000 people, how many of them are really active? I do not know.

Even if you say 1,000 of them are really active or 100 are really active, one person in the United States in 1995, Timothy McVeigh, planted a bomb at the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City where 168 people, 19 children, were murdered. One person. Think about that.

FN: So many points to pick up on that. Barbara, I am curious to hear from you because you have studied this.

How do words become action? How does that happen? We should probably—I wanted to have a bigger conversation. Maybe this is the right time to talk about it: Social media. It is such a big part of this. We know that Facebook and also YouTube are eliminating access to white supremacists, but are they serious about this? Is this actually doable? How do you police that?

BP: Social media is, I think, one of the greatest enablers of the movement right now. Facebook and YouTube and all of these various forums that they have access to become important points for them to connect and by connecting, then build and empower themselves within their group, but it also enables them, so a hatemonger in Toronto can now connect with a stroke of a keyboard with their like-minded others in Birmingham, UK, and Birmingham, U.S. with people in Austria and Australia.

It also creates this broader national network, so a collective national identity, global identity around white nationalism, white supremacy, that empowers them even more. The very access to that increases their sense of strength and empowerment. It increases their capacity to recruit through just their words, through their music, through their games, through whatever sorts of electronic media that might be associated with them. It also, then I think affects the communities that are targeted, because they are also aware of those narratives. I think, in some respects, while it empowers the groups, it disempowers targeted communities as well, so a very dangerous locus for the concentration.

It is also one of the things that contributes to the violence. So many of the mass murders that we have seen associated with the far right, Christchurch, for example, Pittsburgh, even in Quebec City and certainly with the Minassian case in Toronto, have made reference to what they learned online, the kinds of engagements that they have had online, the narratives that they have adopted from some of these far-right websites. There is a straight line to be drawn in many cases.

FN: Mustafa and then Bernie, what do you want to see social media sites do?

MF: We were recently at the Justice Committee making a number of recommendations around countering online hate. I think Dr. Perry pointed to how, for example, in Justice Huot's decision on Alexandre Bissonnette, in paragraphs 9 through 12 of the decision, there was mention about how Alexandre Bissonnette was consulting #muslimban on Twitter. He was on YouTube; he was on Facebook, so it is not a particular social media company.

This is a wide, whole-of-society approach to combatting this online hate issue. In fact, if you go on to various neo-Nazi websites, you will find my name, and you will probably also will find Bernie Farber's name as potential targets.

BF: They like us.

MF: They like us. We are part of their fan club. It is important to think about how we are going to combat that from a whole of society perspective. We are specifically calling on the federal government to begin a parliamentary study for how to regulate social media companies.

While we recognize that the Digital Charter and the Christchurch declaration are important first steps, they remain aspirational, and they have not yet resulted in real, concrete regulation. We are looking for a parliamentary study that will simply bring together the best lines, folks who are thinking about civil liberties, folks who are thinking about the protection of people, people who understand the Internet, people who understand how complicated this web is to weigh in and provide concrete recommendations for the government to build really robust, but balanced regulation around this. Just before going forward, I also want to note that it is really easy for us to think that this stuff happens online and that it is sort of limited to the sort of online scope. In Alberta, which is obviously my home province, there is a group called the III%ers, which Dr. Perry has written on extensively, and this group literally, as we are speaking, gets together and does meetings and does live ammo trainings for practicing going into mosques with semi-automatic rifles. They prepare bombs. They get together and talk about their hatred of Muslims. Their chapter president said that the only good Muslim is a dead Muslim. Recently, affiliates of the III%er organization called the Canadian Infidels scoped out one of my hometown mosques, the Al-Rashid Mosque with one of their folks, whose name I will not say, and entered the mosque and did a video recording to scope out the mosque in a very palpable, terrifying sense. Not only do we have to think about immediate changes to the way we deal with online regulation, but we have to think about how it is acceptable that a group is actively militarizing, actively espousing an ideology that commands for the murder of a segment of our population and we are not doing anything about it. I can tell you that if those same people looked like me and were training in the forests of Alberta with automatic rifles, I think we would be doing something about it. It is incumbent that we take an immediate step, an immediate stance to stop these folks.

BF: Let me just take this one step further. Mustafa spoke about the III%ers, and I mentioned the problem in our Canadian military. Those same III%ers are part of the 33 individuals who are presently getting trained by the Canadian military. They do not have to hide in the forests of Alberta; they are getting the training within the Canadian military. Can you imagine for a moment if these 33 people, instead of being white supremacists, that the report was that there were 33 members of ISIS getting trained in the Canadian military? You guys would be out of your seats, storming the federal government immediately to do something. Yet, if it is white supremacists who have killed us in our houses of worship, that is okay. Leaders have to lead. It is as simple as that. This past January when the United We Roll convoy came to Parliament Hill, you will all remember that, amongst that convoy, at least one third of them—and we had people there on Parliament Hill identifying them—belong to the Yellow Vest Movement, which has turned into the most racist, anti-immigrant, Islamophobic movements in this country. Faith Goldy whom we have talked about, a neo-Nazi enabler, spoke at that event shortly after the leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition spoke there. He had the opportunity to call out racism and bigotry, and he chose not to. The Canadian Anti-Hate Network takes no sides in politics. I called out the defense minister on the military.

I called out the Leader of the Opposition in not speaking out against racism because that is what gives them oxygen. Yes, it may have started in the United States with Trump saying, "There are some good Nazis." There are no good Nazis. They are evil people, period. That is the kind of thing that gives them oxygen. As soon as they hear something like that, they feel that they can step out of the garbage can, dust themselves off and continue with their evil work. We have a lot of work to do, for sure.

FN: I have a bunch of other questions, but I feel like, just because of time, I want to turn it over to the audience if there are any questions, or I could keep going.

Questions & Answers

Q: In America, there is a well-known phrase: "Make America Great Again." I think we can emulate that, leaving out the word 'make' and 'again'.

Canada is a great country, and organizations like the Empire Club have got the fortitude and the wisdom of gathering a well-respected, honest, decent people to explain to us all, though we are not quite perfect, but we have a direction to go. All of you speak as though I think that you suffered, especially Bernie, such that you can sympathize and understand discrimination and bigotry.

My question is: In the long term—we cannot change the past; we are in the present—will the younger generation perhaps have less biased views inherent from previous generations, as the Second World War Nazis or whatever, such that this young country can really flourish? Can we identify as you have done in the speeches, that cancer [of hate], and can the younger generation adopt a well-balanced view of the growth of Canada?

BF: That is an excellent question. I have great hope in the young people of Canada. In the last federal election, when there was a turn towards Islamophobia, Canadians and a lot of young Canadians, turned against that.

I think that is something to recognize. However, let us be clear: The Nazis of the 1980s and 1990s are not the Nazis of 2019. They are not skinheads on the streets getting into fights.

They are in universities.
They are in colleges.
They are in businesses.
They are in law firms.
They are in government.
They are all over the place.

If you take a look at them today, they are wearing suits and ties, nicely trimmed beards, and they are finding ways into young people's consciousness.

We have to find a way to battle that.

The only way to battle that—you have your parents on the one hand, but where are kids spending most of their time? In school. That is where the education really has to begin, as young as kindergarten, right through high school and right through university. If we do not get that information out to them as part of the educational process, I fear for the future.

BP: To add to that, I think the educational process and what needs to be included in that is not just the diversity, education and the anti-oppressive training that they claim that they are getting now. It is not quite clear that is really happening in the schools, but in addition to that, they also need critical digital literacy skills.

This is one of the issues. Not just youth. I would argue even adults need that because there is so much not just misinformation, but disinformation in the media now, social media in particular. We do not all necessarily have that maybe the will or the capacity to unpack that disinformation, to do our own fact checking.

I think it is important that with this next generation, while we have got the opportunity, we have that captive audience in the schools, and that is the time to teach them how to be critical about what they read on social media, how to deconstruct the mythologies that are so common, those narratives of Islamophobia, racism, anti-Indigenous sentiment, misogyny, and all of those other things. I think we have a great opportunity that we cannot afford to lose if, in fact, we do want to move forward with what I see as sort of the realization of poor Canadian values of equity and inclusion and respect for diversity.

FN: That is such a good point about media literacy. I completely agree.

Q: Hi. I have great experiences in this regard, starting in 1980s, when I was at a function at the University of Toronto. The function was attacked, but I was also involved in that. We were attacked by a group called Western Guard. I think Bernie failed to mention them, but they were quite active in those days. That happened. Anyway, that is a long story. I will not get into it too far. It is an old story, also. Recently, for us a new face of Western Guard has appeared in Washington, called Trump.

In my opinion, his "Make America Great Again" has received my response in this card, if you can read it.

FN: No, we cannot read it. What does it say?

Q: It says, "Make Our Planet Green Again." We have to challenge the existing crises that we face in terms of climate change and the nuclear age. Yes, these are problems, but they are not existential problems, not that I am trying to belittle the problem.

They are existential on an individual basis maybe, but as a community at large, perhaps, not.

Anyway, I am just trying to change the focus to the climate crisis, which is a lot more pressing than the issues at hand.

FN: Right. Certainly, there is, and I think everybody in this room knows that this planet is changing and certainly an issue for another day to discuss, but, yes, we are all in this together in terms of the planet. Thank you for that.

Q: I just want to ask any member of the panel, how the economy factors into the rise or fall of hate crimes and hate issues? Barbara, you spoke about education. This is Ontario; you see what is happening with education, so to add hate education onto that, it is not going to happen. Then there is the police.

I suspect there are also cutbacks there. When the economy is good, is hate on the down?

FN: Such a good question.

BP: It is a really good question. I am glad to say Canada came very late to this game, relative to our European counterparts and even American counterparts where the rise of the right has preceded us probably by a decade, at least a decade in Europe, because of the financial crises, subsequent crises in Europe.

I think we are buffered, because we did not suffer quite the same troughs and valleys as other parts of the west, so I think we have been privileged by that.

Look at the Yellow Vests movement, for example, when they began, and it is really a shame what has happened to them, because when they began, it was really grounded in authentic concerns about economic insecurity and, especially, in the energy sector and the oil industry in Alberta. Economic uncertainty can play a role, and that has been since, as you suggested, hijacked and co-opted by the far right, because it is a great legitimate set of concerns to then grasp on the racism as a means of scapegoating. Who is responsible for all of those problems? It is multiculturalism policies; it is globalization; it is all of those bugaboos associated with the far-right narratives. Economic cycles can have an impact.

MF: I agree with Dr. Perry that they certainly—and looking at the sociological conditions that lead to white supremacy, it is important and it is critical, but we also have to recognize that affluent folks can be super-racist, too.

Our folks who are Indigenous, our folks who identify as Black are folks who have experienced that for years not accounting for economic dips and cycles, and they can tell you that very clearly. I think we have to be cognizant of the fact that just looking at sociological indicators does not alleviate us from the personal moral responsibility of standing up against racism, of standing up against white supremacy whenever we see it.

BF: Let me just end with this, because I know we are running out of time. I said leaders have to lead. All of you here are members of different communities, the business community, education community. You, every one of you, have a responsibility from this day forward because you now have this information. You cannot go home and forget it.

You just cannot. It is now imbedded in your minds. I would ask each and every one of you to speak to your MPs; speak to your MPPs; speak to your local councillors; tell them you no longer will stand for this. You want hate education in the schools. You do not want them to pull back from that, as you said, because they will, but you have their ears. Please, this is the time to not be silent. My father used to say, "If you want to get something done, you have got to open your mouth." I implore you all: Open your mouths.

FN: There is a federal election coming; this is the time.

BF: Yes, there is.

FN: Thank you.

KE: To deliver the appreciation remarks, today, we have our board member of the Empire Club of Canada, MJ Perry.

Note of Appreciation, by Ms. MJ Perry, Vice President and Owner, Mr. Discount Ltd.; PhD Candidate, Theology, University of Toronto; Director, Empire Club of Canada

I am a post-war baby of this city. I was raised by what I thought was a diverse and compassionate and caring community, but I was also taught to be a nice, polite little girl who never challenged anything.

I want to thank all of you, Dr. Fakih for sharing your story, Ms. Nasser, Mr. Faber, Mr. Farooq and Dr. Perry for showing us that it is okay to be a little rude sometimes when it is courageous and to point out those things that we need to change.

Thank you for being patient with us to tell us how and thank you for giving us ideas to go forward. I would like to quote Mr. Fakih, when he said, "Hate speech destroys the integrity of our democracy." Thank you all.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thank you, MJ. I found the panel and everything today very moving, and I think this is one of our best events of the year because I think it was really, really from the heart.

I thank you all for coming. I also want to recognize a few people who have supported this event. Obviously, Councillor Thompson, it means a lot that you are here today representing our city. We have a couple of other people.

We have former Finance Minister Charles Sousa here today. I want to thank you. We have a former chief of staff to a premier, Andrew Bevan here today.

Thank you, everyone for coming. Is there anyone in the room representing social media, a large social media company? Is there anyone here in the room? We did invite them to come today. I wanted to recognize them, because I thought they would be part of this conversation. I just wanted to recognize anyone from social media who would be here, but I have not been introduced to anyone.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are almost at the end of our season. We have a few more events coming up.

We have an event "Women Who Build," tonight, about women in the construction sector. Next week, we have a very important event on education. This topic has come up a lot today, with the Conference Board of Canada and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation teaming up. Next week, the Conference Board is releasing a report on how investing in education contributes to the economy.

That will be a big deal, and it will make a lot of news.

It is next Wednesday, at lunchtime. Then, we have the federal health minister coming the following week to talk about palliative care.

There will be a couple more events for the rest of the season. By the end of the season, we will have had 39 events since September, so we are very proud of this season at the Empire Club. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming.

Meeting adjourned.

The Empire Club Presents

THE HONOURABLE MARY NG

CANADA'S MINISTER OF SMALL BUSINESS
AND EXPORT PROMOTION

WITH: WOMEN WHO BUILD BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE BUILDING ECONOMY

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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June 13, 2019

Good evening fellow Directors, Past Presidents, members and guests. Welcome to the 115th season of the Empire Club of Canada, and, welcome, to the Storys Building.

My name is Kent Emerson. I am the President of the Empire Club and your host for today's event.

"Women Who Build" is a great event. Thanks, Marsha, for organizing this.

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Ms. Julie Di Lorenzo, President, Diamante Urban Corp.

Ms. Denise McNally, Senior Vice President, Project Delivery, Infrastructure Ontario

The Honourable Mary Ng, Canada's Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion; MP for Markham–Thornhill

Ms. Marsha Seca, Vice President, Corporate Strategy, Infrastructure Ontario

Ms. Xue Yan, Partner, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP

I would like to start this event by recognizing our sponsors: First of all, LiUNA, who were not able to come.

They have their national conference here. They were a big sponsor and also OMERS. I know Tenio Evangelista also could not come tonight. We also want to recognize the National Post and mediaevents.ca for webcasting today's event. Without all this participation, these events could not happen. I would also recognize there are a number of Empire Club board members here today. I would like to recognize all of them for coming. I saw Ziggy, Michael Kobzar, Jenna Hay. Thank you guys for all coming and supporting. Marsha, of course, is on our panel.

I want to talk about these events. We have started these evening events a couple of years ago. They are growing in popularity. The idea is you come; you pay $40; you get your drink; we eat; then we sit down; we do the panel; and then we eat and drink again. You do not have to run anywhere ever. The idea is that they are social events, and we have our traditional lunches, but our evening events are a lot less formal, and they are a lot of fun. When you see them pop up, come. They are always a lot of fun. That is sort of how they run. I think we are going to get into the topic.

I would like to say the Empire Club prides itself on being a forum that shines light on issues that need to be discussed in Canada, and, particularly, to highlight these issues or discuss them with government. Tonight's event is no exception. The event we had today was no exception. We had an event earlier today on the rise of white nationalism in Canada, which was an incredible success.

It is known that women consistently earn less than their peers. From the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program that sets common standards to assess the skills of trades people across Canada. Certain demographic groups in the Canadian population, traditionally, have been underrepresented in apprenticeship programs in the skilled trades, generally. Women comprise about 14% of NAS apprenticeships overall. Fewer women than men were registered in a Red Seal trade: 59.2% versus 81.2%. Across the top ten Red Seal trades, women are more likely than men to be hairstylists, cooks or apprentices. There are some basic stats.

Tonight, we have a panel not of just construction individuals but from the building trades. We are fortunate to have some of the most successful women in Canada in their trades. We can agree that women are underrepresented, also, at the very top levels of this trade. In having success in their field, they are here to highlight the opportunities and progress that they have had in their careers, to give advice, and to maybe talk about some of the challenges and share their secrets of success with all of you.

It is time to introduce the panel. Our first panelist has been self-employed as a general contractor. Actually, before I do this, our first panelist, Julie Di Lorenzo, has donated something fantastic for you guys tonight. This is really, really special. When you all leave here tonight, we have a Raptors T-shirt for everyone at the Empire Club of Canada.

#Womenwhobuild is the event hashtag, and use @empireclub and you should, obviously, put Julia in there as well. Get on social media, and do your thing.

Our first panelist has been self-employed as a general contractor in the industry since 1982 on such projects as Empire Plaza Condominiums, Terminal Three at Pearson International Airport, as a developer. She has been the builder of the following projects: 520 Kingston Rd., LiUNA Social Housing Development in Ottawa and many, many other projects.

Diamante projects have been awarded the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Project of the Year in 1997, 1998 and 1999. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome the President of Diamante Development Corporation, a real estate development company and general construction contractor, Julie Di Lorenzo.

With more than a decade of experience in senior roles within government, including as former Chief of Staff to the Minister of Transportation, Chief of Staff and Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of Training, College and Universities, Marsha Seca brings a wealth of infrastructure development and public policy expertise to Infrastructure Ontario.

She was a key contributor to the province's plan for civil infrastructure investment.

Having led a mechanical contracting company as an owner/operator, Marsha couples her political experience with her on-the-ground construction experience to move business initiatives forward. Marsha holds an MBA from the Rotman School of Business, and she attended plumbing apprenticeship training—which is amazing to me—at UA Local 46 Plumbers and Steamfitters Training School.

She continues to co-own and act as a Director of the Board of Masen Mechanical and M.A.S. Sheet Metal.

She is a Director of the Empire Club of Canada and a former Director of the Metropolitan Plumbing and Heating Contractors Association. Please, give a round of applause for Vice President of Corporate Strategy at Infrastructure Ontario, Marsha Seca.

Our next guest has spent 25 years in the construction industry before landing on her current job at Infrastructure

Ontario, an agency of the province with the mandate to modernize public assets. Denise oversees a team of professionals to deliver large health care, educational and other social infrastructure projects for the province. She and her team provide advice during project planning on contract models, project structuring and risk allocation, and they play a key role in the overall governance of projects during the transaction period, managing the procurement, negotiations and commercial close processes, which is a big mouthful, I have to say. It sounds complicated.

During construction, the team provides active project management and advisory services to co-sponsors.

Prior to joining Infrastructure Ontario in 2008, Denise provided project management services at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation.

Please, give a round of applause to the Senior Vice President at Infrastructure Ontario, Denise McNally.

Our last guest works in the Toronto office of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP practicing in the area of commercial real estate, and she advises clients on a broad range of commercial real estate matters from acquisition, disposition and financing of commercial real estate properties to structuring and negotiating investment vehicles to achieving clients' varied business objectives.

Please, welcome Partner at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Xue Yan. Our moderator tonight, who just flew here, in the island airport—hot off the airplane—has lots of fancy titles and areas of responsibility, but she is here tonight in her most distinguished capacity within her portfolio, as the minister in charge of growing female entrepreneurship.

She was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Markham–Thornhill in April 2017 and was appointed Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion in July 2018. Throughout her 20 years of public service, Minister Ng has been a passionate community leader and advocate with a proven track record of results in the areas of education, women's leadership, job creation, and entrepreneurship.

Prior to serving as a Member of Parliament, she has worked as Director of Appointments in the Prime Minister's Office. She also served as the Director of Policy in provincial education where she built relationships, negotiated with teachers' unions, and served students while helping to improve Ontario's education system.

Please, welcome the MP for Markham–Thornhill and Canada's Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, the Honourable Mary Ng.

Mary is going to run this panel. I turn it over to you. At a certain point, Mary is going to call on you to do a Q&A and have audience questions. Think of your ideas for that time, so Mary can call upon you. Thank you, everybody.

Women Who Build, with The Honourable Mary Ng

MN: Thank you so much, Kent. This is awesome because, typically, I am on the hot seat having to answer questions. Today, I get to ask the questions which is amazing. I hope we will be able to get some audience input as well. It is really extraordinary to be here with these extraordinary female leaders. I think we will just get right into it.

When I think about what is happening around the world, we are all talking about how to get more women to participate in the Canadian economy. In fact, not only in the Canadian economy, but in all economies.

When I meet with my counterparts around the world, they often talk to me about a couple of things, and one is How do we get more small- and medium-sized businesses a greater share of the pie, so that our small- and medium-sized businesses can grow and trade with each other, whether it is in Europe or in Asia? The other thing they ask me is, What are you doing, and what are you doing in Canada, because you are leading, and you are putting a very deliberate focus on growing female entrepreneurs and female-led businesses, and how are you guys doing that? I get to talk often about what the government is doing around creating more female entrepreneurs or female business leaders.

I have a mandate from the prime minister to double the female entrepreneurs in this country by 2025. Here is the reason for doing it. I lead a $2-billion investment plan to take on that task, and I often say I am not particularly a numbers person; the folks around here are, but here is the return to the Canadian economy: $150 billion to the Canadian economy.

If I think about it, a $2-billion investment with a $150-billion return to the Canadian economy is a pretty good ROI, from where I sit. It is not only the right thing to do, but it is the economic, smart thing to do.

The question to all of you—and I will start with you, Denise—is the building industry, much like technology and others, has been male dominated; what is your view about—and I just relayed the context for entrepreneurship—the importance of getting women into the industry, into the building industry, and how do you think we might go about doing that? I am sorry I started with you for the hard question.

DM: I think that women have a lot to offer, and I am speaking from where I sit, and we are very involved in all aspects of constructions, and the projects that we do, but they have a lot to offer. They have a unique perspective; they have a thinking process that is very unique, and it is needed by a lot of the activities that we do.

I think we want to encourage them to be more involved, and there are jobs for them.

I sit on a committee, and I will not get into details, but I like to give some context or a bit of a story, and I am sitting around a table. There had to be 20 men, and I think there was me, being the only female at the table. That was a discussion. The discussion was a little bit more pointed in terms of How do we get women to get the skills, and how can we get them to join our apprenticeship program and to get into the education?

Should we talk to the parents? How do we get them to get into the school and the programs? I was looking at them thinking, "Well, that is fine; it is a good thing, but a lot of it starts from the industry." The industry has to lead the change. I think they have to change the mentality. I think it starts from the large corporations.

The dominant players in the industry have to lead the way, and others will follow. They have to promote and advocate saying, "We want women to join our firm; we are going to give them the same opportunities as we give the men; we are going to pay them the same as we do the men," and they have to promote that. They should be saying, "Here are our statistics, and here is our progression that we are doing internally in our company. We have policies to promote it," and they should share that within the community. Other companies should follow.

It really has to start from the industry because the problem is not necessarily with the women not wanting to join and get the education; it starts from the marketplace. Women will go and get the education if they know they are going to be welcomed at the other end and have a job waiting for them, and they have the same opportunities for progression as the men.

MN: As a female CEO of a significant, incredible company in this field, what is your perspective and response to what Denise just said?

JD: To give you an idea of scale, I am doing one of the largest projects in the city right now and about $750 million of work. You might see a profile in a recent magazine, and it is called the "King of Condos." There was not a woman on the page. This is great. Am I yelling? And I do this at the house.

MN: It is okay to be loud and bold.

JD: I start by saying something serious, but you have to have a sense of humour when you have your own business, and you are a woman. I am just going to give you a cute little story. I was sitting at my desk. It was 6:30p.m. It was one of those, I feel, really cool days, like, my clothes were great; my hair was great; I had a great meeting. I was at the phone, and it was 6:30, and the principal of my daughter's school called.

I go, “Hello.” She asked, “How are you?” I said, “I’m great.” She asked, “Where are you?” I answered, “I’m in my office,” feeling really good. She said, “Oh, your daughter is here,” because I forgot her. I forgot to pick her up. One of the things that is serious about that was that childcare is still only deductible up to $8,000. That, literally, allows me to have a nanny for one day a week. People know they get emails from me at four in the morning, so I have a relay of people that help me do my job. Until we understand that there are things that need to change, structurally, women will not necessarily be able to dedicate their time to their jobs. Childcare at $8,000 a year is not satisfactory.

Are there other impediments to women? I say be a developer. It is the best job in the whole wide world. You own your space. You own your work and you get to meet the most amazing people. I would tell you that I have been really lucky. There have not been a lot of impediments. If there have been impediments, they have been impediments that existed in the industry in the first place. In one era, there was no capital. Now, there is definitely not a problem with capital. It is really about surrounding yourself with the smartest people, but it is not just women; it is women and men. I have had great men who are sponsors and believed in me. You find people that believe in you, and avoid the people that do not believe in you.

MN: That is a very good point. I will pick up on your point about affordable childcare. Our investments and our economic investments to help women grow in business will not do it on its own. Putting $40,000 in affordable childcare out there into the province's men in the country is going to help women be successful in our view. We absolutely agree and putting forward a $10-million construction fund, which is a construction fund to facilitate and promote women in construction, in particular, is something that we are looking very much forward to working with you in the industry and everyone in the industry to help promote more women participating, leading and getting into the field of construction.

MS: Can I jump in?

MN: Yes, please.

MS: I just wanted to add on something that Julie said. When I went into the construction sector, I went in as an owner. I did not find that particularly hard. People were welcoming of me. It was all good. It was fine. People respected my mind. I think that, though, what Denise says is important, and I will talk a little bit about my experience in apprenticeship training.

I think that the industry has to create a culture of being accepting of women from the bottom up through the top. I think once you get to a place where you are established, I think your title somewhat helps, and if you have proven yourself, but when you are going to apprenticeship training, and you are the only woman in the room, and your instructor is nice to you and not nice to the rest of the guys in the room, I was fine with that, but culturally it is wrong. Going out to job sites—I could see why it is not always culturally inviting for women in the field to go out to job sites.

I agree with Denise that the industry has to step up and fix that. I will make one last point. I also believe that I got involved because some relative was involved. I think I read the StatsCan statistics that say, generally, women who do get involved do so because they grew up in it or somebody influenced them in that nature. I think the influence should spread to elementary schools. Why are we not talking about that as a viable career for children? My son certainly does not think that girls are different than he. We are not really promoting that even as parents when we put our children in dance versus hockey. There is a cultural shift that needs to happen at the lowest levels as well as in the industry.

MN: I often say that you have to see it to be it, to see women in leadership throughout all levels in the industry, I think, is going to make that difference. I think what I am also hearing is it is not just one or the other; it actually requires everyone. It requires industry; it requires parents who will encourage their girls; it requires the tools that we have that governments have put into it.

The question, actually, is for you, Marsha. You have a really interesting background because you started, and you continue to have a business in construction, in plumbing. Yet, you have also spent a lot of years doing public policy and public policy specifically to put programs together that are apprenticeship programs that will then help encourage and create that right environment for everyone—for females, for women, for girls to get into apprenticeships, into the trades.

Can you talk to us about that—and yet, the numbers are as we described, still quite low?

MS: Failed.

MN: Let us talk about not that. Let us talk about, going forward: What can we learn from this? What can we be doing so that the apprenticeship programs actually can work for women to increase women in trades?

MS: I think I started to answer it earlier. I think girls just need to see it as a viable option and not grow up believing that they are too weak to do it. Then, when they get to the job site, they need to feel welcomed.

They cannot be treated like the person who just holds the sign or whatever it is that you see going on, on the job site—the calendars that are plastered on the walls and the culture that goes on, on sites. I hate to be crass, but it is true. It exists. I think we have got it at the post-secondary level. Certainly, they are welcome to attend. The numbers are increasing. The government is pumping money into programming. They get bursaries for their tools and all the rest. I think it just has to start younger. We have to start talking about it in the K-12 arena, and then, eventually, the parents will shift with that.

MN: I am sorry to put you on the hot seat, again. I am going to go to Xue Yan in a second, but Julie, in response to this, and, thinking of it from the point of view of the industry, are there some of those challenges that the industry can put their minds to, around creating an environment and a culture that, right from the get-go, women who enter into the field feel like they belong there?

JD: I think it is a little bit of give and take. You cannot expect to leave a big meeting, because you have got an emergency and not have everybody drop their shoulders. What you do is you end up creating your own environments. I am famous for my breakfasts.

Why breakfast? Because I get the kids wherever they are going, and you can find me at the same table practically every morning having breakfast meetings. Why? Because it lets me be productive. The point of that is you own your own space. When you own your own business, you do not have to go to a meeting when someone else tells you. You figure out the times that work for you, and you organize your life around what works for you. You cannot really expect the whole world to accommodate you on their schedule, but you create a life that you need based on your own limitations.

To be honest, the only time I have seen a problem when I was President of the Home Builders' Association, was when I actually hid that I was pregnant.

I do not know if anybody knows Donna Karan wrap dresses. I hid for five, six, seven months until I got elected. When I got elected, I made sure I wore the tightest Donna Karan dress. My belly was out to here.

People were going, "Oh, my God, what are we going to do with her now?" The point was, was that fair to them? No, I felt that was fair to me, because I knew I could do the job. I had my baby while I was President. A lot of people here know I had my BlackBerry in the room with me. You also have to find people who support you. As I said, I had a great colleague at the Home Builders' Association who was a supporter.

When someone said, "She cannot do the job," he said, "She is going to do the job. If you do not support her, you have to go." You continuously cultivate the people around you who support you. There will be a bit of overlap and a bit of give and take, but you will find the people that support you.

MN: That is great. Speaking of the industries that collaborate with the construction industry development, you need lawyers to put deals together. You certainly put a number of commercial real estate deals together.

What is your perspective, Xue Yan, around those who are practicing alongside you? Are you finding that there are other women there? Do you find that—we certainly do in my own business, when you are a leader at the table and you have other collaborators at the table who also add to the voice—it actually strengthens it? From your point of view, on the deal-making side, what do you think?

XY: My experience is slightly different from the rest of the panel, just because I am not on the site, like Julie, to fight with other male counterparts or to do what you do, Marsha, but I do all that in a boardroom. I do all that through emails at our fingertips and conference calls. As probably most of you know, now half of law school students are female. Close to half, if it is not already over half, of practicing lawyers are female.

In commercial real estate, for some reason, still, the share of the female lawyers is still, comparatively speaking, much, much less for multiple reasons, I think. It is even now. I have been practicing for ten years, and, from day one—it is still, now, uncommon to walk into a boardroom with a room full of women. It is still, primarily male, I would say.

Especially on the business side, I would say, probably, you see more female lawyers, but when you are dealing with your clients or your client's team, it is not uncommon at all. It is all male than the other side. You have to negotiate with the other side, who are also male. I am actually used to it. I am immune to it, but I am aware of it. I know our title today is "Barriers and Opportunities," and I am reluctant to use the word 'barriers', because barriers seem to imply some drastic measures has to be taken to break down. I would rather call that 'challenges' because challenges breed opportunities. The rest of our panelists—they all know much better than me—know that in order for real estate business to succeed, you have to see who is consuming the real estate. Now, we all know a significantly increasing number of women are consuming real estate.

When we design, when we build a building, we have to address their concerns. If you are an architect or a designer, or a builder, and you have a woman on your team, you have a woman's perspective, and your business is likely to be more successful. I would think it is more diverse.

From a practicing law perspective—and my perspective is a little bit different, though, because I do not think we can see women as monolithic, because everybody's experience is different, in terms of cultural upbringings, socio-economic status. I am a woman, but I am also an Asian woman, and I am also relatively a newcomer to this country. I came to Canada in 2002 for school. When you get to so many challenges or hurdles in front of you, you kind of lose track of how many were there, so you kind of just focus on what do you want to do. It is my story. With respect to my decision-making, I never really think about whether I can do it or not because I am a woman, naively. And that has somehow benefited me, because I never think about that role. I just do not think that way. Of course, I have to say, I am very fortunate to have mentors along my way.

I think one way to answer the Minister's question about how we go about this is I think it is very important we talk about external measures. We have to see from an industry perspective, but also from within, as a woman professional—you know what you want, and you seek out the mentors. I think mentors are very important, very effective. Mentorship is an effective tool to help the younger generation of women professionals who are interested in the building or commercial real estate industry to succeed. I think, especially for us on the stage and I think many of you, as well, we have been given a lot of opportunities along the way. I think it is almost like an obligation on us to give that back to the next younger generation to help. I will end this—I promise I will stop after this—which is just a personal story to respond to some of you who mentioned that you cannot be who you cannot see. Is that how you say it?

MN: You need to see it to be it.

XY: You need to see it, yes. Very interesting. I have two little ones. When my daughter was about three or four, and my son was two-ish, I asked my son, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" My son, knowing I am a lawyer, said, "I want to be a lawyer."

My daughter looked at him saying, "Do not be silly; you are not a girl. You cannot be a lawyer."

MN: Bravo.

XY: This conversation, if it happened 60 years ago, you all know how that conversation would go. It was the opposite. Of course, it is two kids talking. I was at the side, and I was shocked. Sometimes, it just takes us to show people what we are doing, showcase what we do, and then everything, it will follow.

MN: I think very much we are certainly of that ethos—to see it, to be it. Speaking of leadership and speaking about how a sector or an individual or individuals can take a bit of the leap or take a little bit of the lead, Denise, you manage a portfolio that is some of the largest and important infrastructure projects here, on behalf of the province. I am just wondering whether, with respect to schools, hospitals or the other institutional infrastructure projects that are part of your portfolio, you have seen an increase in women participating on those projects? In government, you sometimes are able to create an environment because you actually have a lever on the rules. When I think about what I am doing, I think, "Hmm, so we want to help Canadian companies scale up.

We want them to grow. How do I help some of our Canadian companies grow?" Well, you take a piece of what government is going to buy because we are a very big purchaser, and we make sure that we give preference to Canadian small- and medium-sized companies, but we are also going to give preference to women entrepreneurs or women-led businesses and so forth. The government actually has an opportunity to put some parameters around—are you seeing any changes at all in the infrastructure projects that you get to lead?

DM: In terms of any policy, in terms of our procurement policy, no, we do not shape or direct in terms of requiring certain women-led businesses. Of course, we would encourage it. I would say in the past, having been in construction for 25 many, many years, I would say, recently, these projects are very big, so each of the bidding teams brings together a wide, a diverse sector of the overall. It includes the lawyers and the lenders and the architects and the design engineers. It is very large. I would say it is good to see today and even so much as even ten years ago that there is a lot more women who are participating in these pursuits and taking lead roles. They are not just in the office helping design and prepare for these bids. These bids are very, very expensive, because the projects are very large.

They are leading the discussions and the presentations. They have the ability to connect with the audience. They have the ability to explain technical terms in a non-technical way that makes the clients understand because, remember, these are users; they are not necessarily technical people. I would say, in terms of what we are seeing, in the design and even the engineering trades, is almost equal representation. Obviously, not so much in the design engineering. It might be slightly less in terms of women participation.

MN: That will change.

DM: It is changing. It is. I have a couple of examples, but, I say that when we go to site, there is still some of that historical; it has not changed very much. It is very male dominated. Site work is tough. I know we have talked about this off stage, and I am not going to say 'barriers', but it is tough. A couple of examples I would give in terms of just how good women are at really presenting, and because of their power—they are very influential. There is an engineer at a construction firm, one of the prominent construction firms we use, and she always shows up, and she is an electrical engineer. She always does the presentations. I do not know how she makes electrical drawings interesting, but she does. She explains it, and she does not get fussed, and she does it better than anyone out there in terms of presenting. It really helps. If you have good presentation, the audience really is very receptive. I can name a couple of lawyers, but there are some female lawyers which I know whom no one likes to see across the table from them in these negotiations because you know she is very tough, very respected. Women are really making a place. I would say there is still always some challenges that we have to work through at the trade and at the site level. I think we have all talked about it. It is tough. It is not insurmountable. I always go and talk to the general site managers, and I always ask, "How many females do you really have?" I do. He said, "Well, actually, we really promote, as a corporation. We want women to step up, and I have a couple of supervisors who are women." He said, "I actually prefer them, because they are very detail-oriented and very neat and organized, and they tell me what I need to know." I said, "I am getting excited. This is great. I like to hear this." He says, "But…," and, I said, "Oh, God." I was deflated immediately. He said, "Well, there are still some things that make the women really good but which can sometimes be a challenge. There is that emotional aspect in that. Sometimes they cry too much, and they cry in front of the men." I said, "Oh, jeez. Let me know if you need me to talk to them, because I do not cry. It is never them; it is everybody else." I think mentorship is very important, especially when you get to the trade level and the site level. It is tough. It is a lot slower to change, but I think we have changed leaps and bounds. I think women really have a good voice, and they are very good. I will say to all the bid teams or people who represent bid teams that they are very strong, and they are very well received by the audience. The audience does not see gender. They hear a really good story and a good sales pitch.

MN: I sit around a cabinet table. There are half of us who are women and the other half who are men. When there is a tough issue to debate through, to work through, from time to time, emotions do come up, and it is regarded as good input. The reason it is regarded as good input is because of the diversity of views, because, at the end of the day, someone I think here said that your customer or your consumer represents that diversity now, and to be responsive and to be competitive to be able to get that business, to have that perspective and a wider range of perspectives, is probably what we are starting to see more and more of. As far as questions go, those are the ones that I have got. Maybe what we will do is we will throw it out to the floor, and we will get some questions. I want to save just a little bit of time at the end, because I have one last question for everybody on the panel. For now, why don't we throw it to the floor? Who wants to do the first question? I feel like Kent is supposed to do this. I have now just taken it over.

Questions & Answers

Q: Hello. I have a question. I agree with where it starts to promote women and the opportunities to women. You have to start with institutions. If I have a proposal to become a proprietor or to build a company, and I go to a financial institution, and I say, "I need some help; I need some capital," you need to start with institutions, because I do not think women are getting the help that they need. I speak firsthand because I am in that industry where I lend. It is very difficult for a woman, even though she has a full-time job; she has a great salary; she has a great proposal. Banks do not lend in certain areas if they consider that risky.

MN: I feel like that is an question that, if you do not mind, I will take it. It is precisely why we have a strategy, which is the first ever women's entrepreneurship strategy. Let me give you some statistics. Ninety-nine percent of our businesses in this country are small- and medium-sized businesses. What percentage do you think are women-owned or women-led? It is better than two. Sixteen. It is only 16%. Earlier I said it is 16%, and yet we know we can actually add to the Canadian economy. That 16% right now, by the way, contributes $150 billion to the Canadian economy, and they employ $1.5 million Canadians. That is female entrepreneurs out of that 16. Imagine doubling that and actually having that kind of participation. You are absolutely right. The issues that face women, those barriers—and they are barriers—that we are working to overcome, to access to capital I hear about all the time. I hear it from small- and medium-sized businesses across the country all the time, but I do particularly hear it from female entrepreneurs. Because of the industries that they tend to be in, they are considered higher risk, or the lending or the collateral that is needed tends to be more of a challenge. Those are some of the things that we are absolutely tackling as part of that strategy. From the business owner and here on the panel, do you want to talk about how to address that from your standpoint?

JD: Access to capital? I would say when I first started in 1982—so it is 35 years now—I do recall if I applied for a credit card and my partner, a man, did, he would get a larger credit limit. I think we have come a long way, though. I have got to be honest with you. I think that now you have a lot of banks that are very sensitive. You have got a lot of female bank managers now on the other side of that table. I have not seen, for example, as a developer, any difficulty with access to capital any longer. In fact, there is so much money out there for developers now that you are just actually just picking a suitable bank. What I find is if I find resistance, I just find someone else. You really have to learn that you do not push against the wall. Just move, and you will find someone else. Once upon a time, the simplest advice I ever got was when you feel you are at the edge of the table, and you cannot see anything better, you just push yourself higher and you will get the whole plane of the table. There is a whole depth of financing available there. BDC does a great job and, also, they provide mentorship.

MN: We have increased their portfolio. Part of that $2-billion strategy, $1.6 billion, is going specifically into this, into BDC, to capitalize female entrepreneurs.

On that, you are absolutely right. It is not so much the money part; it actually is the mentorship and accessing, getting the advice and getting access to the mentors and the supply chains and so forth. I am going to make a plug. Go to innovation.canada.ca or download my Canada app, Canada Business app, and it will guide you through the various streams of capital that might be there for female entrepreneurs.

Q: Some people have to take loans. I think when you find somebody vulnerable, it is kind of sad, because I think the government should step in and say, "You are a female; you are an entrepreneur; you want to be in the business," and they, the government have to actually give some more incentive.

MN: Okay.

Q: Hi. Thanks. You guys spoke a lot about mentorship and sponsorship. Julie gave a really good example of somebody going above and beyond to advocate for you. In an effort to try to take something away, my question is what two characteristics would you have to see in someone for you to do the same, for you to say, "This person or this female is going to do this job," so that we know how to better display those characteristics to our mentors?

JD: That is a beautiful question. I was going to make a joke that this whole side looks like my family, because they bought all the tickets. We have a motto. We take in seven to ten kids every summer, and we teach.

It is not men or women or boys or girls. I see character. Character is number one. Leadership comes from having values, value-driven people. That is the number one criteria. Can I talk about a little loan interview I went to? I went to a very famous person for a loan once. I was really nervous. I practiced, and I had all my proformas. He did not ask me one question about my business. The first question was about my ex-husband, which is a very interesting topic. It is too much drama for tonight. You see, there is humour in business; otherwise, you go crazy. The second question was, are you spending too much time doing charity work? Is your eye off the ball at work? I thought that is a fantastic question, too, which leads me into another bit of advice. I said to him, "Why did you not ask me any questions about my business?" He said, "You would not have even been in the door if I did not think you knew what you were doing. I want to know what kind of person you are." I would tell you, as an entrepreneur, hands down, what gets you to the finish line is your character and your integrity. I would say that would be number one. Then, we can figure out what we want to do after that. I really genuinely believe that. Hopefully, my team has always known that. Talk about the philanthropy for a second. Another time, can I tell another joke or not really?

MN: Yes.

JD: I think I am funny. My family does not think I am funny, so I got you guys in front of me.

MN: That is such a great question that once you are finished, I am going to have the others answer that question, too, because I think that is a great question.

JD: I promise not to take that long. I do massive play dates, because I cannot do one play date at a time, because I have no time. I got a bus. We were all going to the Jonas Brothers—all these moms and kids.

We looked out the window, and everybody at the bar was a man. One of my friends, who sold her company for $400 million turned to me and said, "The reason there is a problem is because they are in the bar, and we are on the bus going to the Jonas Brothers."

What she and I then decided was how we do our socialization, which is fundamental to business, I tell everybody: Be in the traffic or do not bother going.

Do not even bother being an entrepreneur if you are not in the traffic. How you do it is a really nice way.

You get on a board, if you know someone who can get you on a board, a nonprofit board, and you start to make connections. Then they know your character.

Again, it always goes back down to character.

DM: I would say it is the confidence, confidence in yourself and having confidence. And having conviction is when you are right and when you are wrong, you are able to admit that, but I think it really is about confidence. If you know you are right, be very confident in saying and voicing your opinion. I think that you have to, in this industry, in building, especially.

MS: I think what I will say is I felt sometimes, as a woman in construction, that I had to always be proving myself in a way that I did not so much in public policy and politics because people—they view you with their biases. They see the blonde woman who did not grow up in a trade, and they think, "What do you know?"

They have these biases. I felt that I was constantly having to prove myself. I think that was probably the reason why I went to trade school, because I wanted to show them that I could do it, too, and that I knew just as much as they did. I guess I am agreeing with both Julie and Denise, but my motto has always been, "I am going to work harder and know more; therefore, you cannot challenge me." I think that would be my advice.

XY: I think integrity, you mentioned, is very important.

If I have to pick another one, it would be take ownership of what you do, and you always do that extra mile, because that really makes you stand out, like you always do something more than what you are being asked.

I find that for articling students or junior lawyers, when I see that character, that attribute in them, I know they are going to make it. It is always that extra.

MN: That is great advice from these female leaders.

Work hard, be confident, have character, integrity and value, and I think that holds you well. I think, in this industry, but quite honestly, I think in almost every industry there is, it is synonymous. Really good advice.

Q: Hi. This is a great presentation, and it is bringing lots of value, so thank you all very, very much. There is one thing that I want to ask that we talked a little bit about, I think, and it is mentorship. What I wanted to ask you all is have any of you used an association or something where you are a member of that helped you along your path? If so, what was it and how did it help you?

XY: Not in my case, actually. I belong to all of the lawyers associations, this and that Bar. I am primarily there just for me to be up to date as to what is going on in the industry and so forth and to know people. Then, you get to meet the clients more in terms of business development, for me, rather than for the mentorship purposes.

We have to remember, mentorship comes in different forms. It is formal, informal. I have mentors both within my firm BLG and outside the firm—male and female. Some are more professional in a way that they just teach me how to do things, how to do the deal, how to negotiate. Some are more about the career path, how to advance, how to develop your business. You can find multiple mentors for different purposes.

JD: When I started at FBDB—now, they are called BDC—they had great mentorship programs in the credit union movement. Community lending is really a very interesting way, if you are starting a small business, to get advice. Other than that, I have got to say, when I started, all my advisors were older. Now, all my advisors are younger than I am. I talk to my team all the time. "What do you think? We have a problem." We talk about the problem. I say, "What do you think?" Perspective does not necessarily come from someone that is older than you. It comes from people who are going in the same direction as you.

MS: I am going to make three comments. I do not think we have to look at mentors as men or women. I think that is a whole conversation to unpack. I had lots of mentors who were men, very welcoming to me in construction, who are lovely older men, who wanted to help me and tried, in many ways, and with whom I still talk to this day. As a Director of the Board of the Empire Club, the reason I put this event together is because I believe we need to build a network and help each other and stand by each other. I did not want it to be so much about barriers as much as it is highlighting that there is opportunity and trying to actually influence the message out there that this world is not just for men. I do not think men think so, either—not all of them, anyway.

Many of them do not. I am going to say, thirdly, yes, I sat on a board. It was on the board of the Metropolitan Plumbing and Heating Contractors Association.

I think that helped me a lot to get some credibility in my job because, although they were all men, they knew that I knew things and could do things that they could not do, and they respected that. I gained some mentors that way, too, but mostly they were men. I wanted to do this event so that women—we have to bring each other up, too. We have to help each other out.

MN: See it to be it.

DM: I would say that when I was growing up through the industry, there were not those associations specifically to support women, but I would say, like Marsha, my mentors were men in the industry. I always tell the story that really stuck with me and which really propelled me through the industry. I remember asking, because I grew up in construction with my brother, "Well, how do you feel when you see a woman in the room or you see a woman coming in who is either an engineer, a landscape architect or whatever it is that you are doing?

How do you respond to her?" He said, "There is always a noise that is around when they see a woman."

This is many years ago, so there was always the tittering or what have you. He said, "When it comes down to it, as long as she knows what she is talking about and she is giving me direction, so it is not slowing me down on site.

It all comes down to business. If she knows what she is talking about, I will listen to her, because I have got to get on site and do this, and I have people waiting, so she better know what she is talking about." That is what I always think. I think we have touched on this, which is you are going to have to work a little bit harder.

Maybe it is just the nature. You know what they say: A woman has to work twice as hard to make half as much, but I had to. It is important to know your stuff and then stand by your convictions, and you know you are right. Then, you will gain respect. When it comes down to it, they really just want direction, so they can get out on the site and do it. Everything else is just noise.

MN: What Denise is talking about is a woman boss.

XY: It is so true, though. At the end of the day, it is your proven track record that really speaks volumes.

At the beginning, I do not remember how many times I negotiated with a male lawyer on the other side, and, especially, if it was a senior, like 20 or 30 years older than me, I could just tell by the first line if he was not thinking too much of me and was very condescending.

Then, once you start to give the reasons and arguments, then they start to listen. Being Asian is not helping, because a lot of people think we are perpetual college students until we hit 65. It is true.

They were just saying, "How old are you?" I am not young. I am actually not young.

MN: That is a good problem.

XY: Well, that is a small problem. When you really know your stuff, when you know what you are doing, at the end of the day, really, other people will listen.

MN: I have been getting the hand signal back there.

We are heading towards a wrap, but here is the last one question I have for everyone. I am going to start with Marsha, because I started with Denise the first time.

To the group, if you could give one tweet-able piece of advice to women who are curious about getting into the building industry, what would it be?

MS: Work hard, be strong.

XY: Get involved now, today.

JD: Speak a little louder than you think is polite.

MN: That is 140 characters, too. I hope those who are tweeting it are actually tweeting this.

DM: I am going to be very unoriginal when you think of it.

I am saying just do it; the time is right; do it. If you like construction, and you know you can do it, just do it. There is nothing stopping you. Ignore the noise, and just be strong.

MN: That is fantastic.

Thank you so very much. Everyone let us give the panel a hand. I loved being the one asking the questions today. It was awesome!

KE: You did a great job. The appreciation remarks are normally done by the sponsor, Joseph Mancinelli, but, tonight, they are going to be done by a board member, Jenna Hay, from the Empire Club, who looks exactly like Joseph Mancinelli.

MN: The Raptors T-shirts are going. Before even that, I would say, “Go Raptors Go!”

Note of Appreciation, by Ms. Jenna Hay, Head of Policy Development and Regulatory Affairs, Lending Loop; Director, Empire Club of Canada

I can talk longer because I am no longer standing in the way of them. I want to just take a moment, before I read Joe's remarks to thank this panel. I think a really good sign of an excellent event is the fact that I was sitting there regretting not having a notebook with me. Thank you so much.

I want to give a special thank you to Minister Ng. Minister, as you know, and as Kent alluded to earlier, we really have been striving, especially this past year at the Empire Club, to have conversations that matter, to have conversations that, as Kent had today, sometimes are difficult in our society, but are really important to have. Every single time we have picked up the phone and called you, Minister, you have responded enthusiastically, and we are very appreciative of that. Thank you so much. Tonight is no exception.

Of course, I want to thank all of our panelists for such engaging and dynamic remarks— certainly, that tweetable advice at the end was great. Also, just one very special round of applause for Marsha, who really made all of this happen.

It is a pleasure serving on the board with you, Marsha, and thank you for expanding my horizons tonight, among other people. As Kent mentioned, I won the contest of the

Joe Mancinelli look-alike we had earlier. Thank you for that applause. I am just here to deliver some remarks on behalf of Joseph Mancinelli. He is the LiUNA International Vice President and Regional Manager for Central and Eastern Canada, and he actually sends his greetings from Montreal. He asked us to communicate the following.

He says, "Apologies that we cannot be with you this evening. We are concluding our LiUNA Canadian Conference here, in Montreal, but LiUNA is proud to sponsor such a dynamic and empowering event with exceptional female leaders who are paving the way to embrace and promote women in leadership roles and changing the perspective of women in the trades. LiUNA continues to work with signatory contractors, like Julie, to showcase the female talent that we have throughout Canada. We still have work to do, but it is because of the leadership of the women you have heard from this evening that we are changing ways for a better and more inclusive tomorrow." That is from Joe. Thank you very much.

As Kent mentioned before, we really cannot do this without our sponsors, so thank you to LiUNA and OMERS as well. I will turn it back over to you, Kent.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

A couple of more things. We have had a great season at the Empire Club. This is our last evening event.

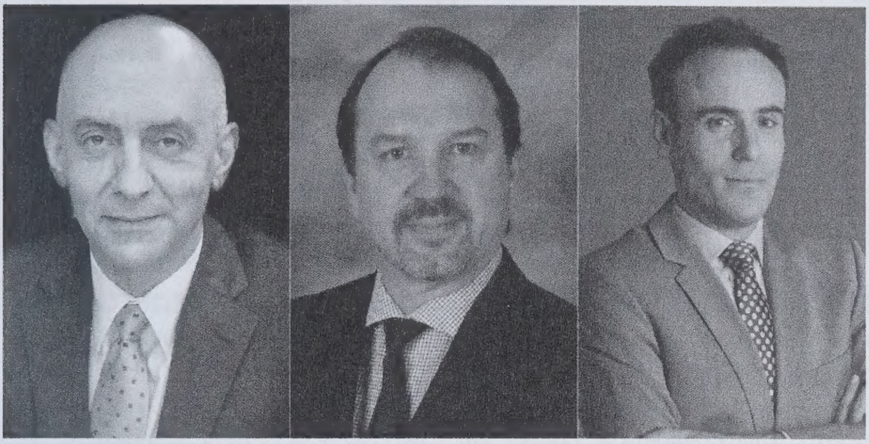
We do have two more events. Next week, we have the Chief Economist of the Conference Board of Canada doing an event with OSSTF on education, talking about the need to invest in education and about what it does for the economy. I think it is going to be a very important event.

The Federal Health Minister, Mary Ng's colleague, will be here on June 24th for a lunch. Both our lunches are going to be fantastic. I want to thank all of you for coming. What I am going to ask to happen here is for the sound team at VVC to strike the chairs in the podium after we are done and all of you can get your pictures with the Minister on stage, if you want.

The panel has these Raptors T-shirts. We could get pictures with them on and have lots of fun. I just want to thank Julie for providing all of you with a Raptors T. I think she deserves a special round of applause. Ladies and gentlemen, meeting adjourned.

Thank you.

The Empire Club Presents



PEDRO ANTUNES, HARVEY BISCHOF & JON ERLICHMAN:

THE ECONOMIC CASE FOR INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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June 19, 2019

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. From the Royal York Hotel in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present "The Economic Case for Investing in Education: A Report by the Conference Board of Canada."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Pedro Antunes, Chief Economist, Conference Board of Canada

Mr. Harvey Bischof, President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO)

Mr. Jon Erlichman, Senior Anchor, BNN Bloomberg; Correspondent/Anchor, CTV National News

Guests:

Mr. Pierre Côté, General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO)

Ms. MJ Perry, Vice President & Owner, Mr. Discount Ltd.; PhD Candidate in Theology (University of Toronto); Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Ltd.; Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Marcel Wieder, President and Chief Advocate, Aurora Strategy Group Inc.

The Empire Club throughout history, has had dozens of speeches focused on education, but very few have focused on the impact of the economy of education. I did find a speech in 1992. The Honourable Pierre Cadieux, the minister of state for youth, addressed the Empire Club in his speech focused on the impact of high school dropouts on the Canadian economy in the 1990s. At the time, it was predicted that many young Canadians were expected to leave school without finishing secondary education.

He said, "Unless we reduce the rate of high school dropouts in Canada, more than one million young Canadians will leave school in this decade without finishing high school.

Think about the economic and social effects of that as parents and as businesspeople. The economic impact is clear and quantifiable." He then quoted an organization called the Conference Board of Canada and went on to say, "The Conference Board of Canada estimated that the direct cost to Canadian business on illiteracy at $4 billion a year and the indirect cost at $10 billion when industrial accidents and absenteeism are factored in." What I have learned from this is that the Conference Board of Canada has influenced Canada's leaders on education for literally decades looking at the impact of secondary school education. That is why we are pleased to welcome this report today. With a new provincial government, Ontario's education sector is in a transformative moment. Because of that, today's presentation is timely.

What I observed when I was in government was everyone has an opinion on education. Think about that.

What other sectors touch so many people? With health care, not everyone has an experience in a hospital, but, in education, people are either in school, or they have their own memories of their own education, or they have children or grandchildren going to school, or they are teachers.

That is why so many people are interested in the news coming out of the event today.

What you are going to hear right here at the Empire Club is Pedro Antunes from the Conference Board. He will launch the report and explain this body of work and why it matters to all of us. We are honoured that you chose this stage, Pedro, to come and launch a report today.

Secondly, we have our moderator, Jon Erlichman, from the Business News Network. It is not an accident that we chose Jon. The report cites the role on the economy that education played in 2018. It says, "In 2018 public education accounted for 3.2% of Ontario's total economic output and supported just over 290,000 jobs or 4.5% of total jobs in the province." That is a lot of jobs and a lot of economic activity, so it makes sense that Jon is here today to talk about that part and his experience on the Business News Network.

Then, of course, you have Harvey Bischof. He is really the person who has got to look at this report and say, "What does this mean? What does this mean in the future?

What does this mean for government? What does this mean for how the unions will approach this topic going forward?" This is our event today. Before I get started with the introduction, there are cards on each of your tables; if you write down questions and raise your hand, our Empire Club team are here, and they will bring the questions up for the Q&A portion of the event.

Without further ado, I am going to introduce our guest speaker today. He manages a talented team of economists in producing medium-term and long-term economic forecasts along with economic indicators and reports.

He joined the Conference Board of Canada as an economist in 1991, after working with the Canadian Forecasting Group at the Bank of Canada. He had a stellar career at the Conference Board. He has moved progressively into more senior positions. Prior to his current role, he was Deputy

Chief Economist of the Conference Board's National and Provincial Forecast Team. He was responsible for custom research work and economic analysis.

In addition to the regular forecast publications, he has been researching the impact of demographic change on the fiscal sustainability of health care. He has contributed to several international projects, helping decision-makers in Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Ukraine develop appropriate forecasting and policy analysis tools.

To launch his report, please, welcome the chief economist of the Conference Board of Canada, Pedro Antunes.

Mr. Pedro Antunes

Thank you, Kent. It is a real pleasure for me to be here. I would say that the Empire Club should probably do a little bit more on economics a little more often. It is an important part of certainly what I look at. It is my bias.

It was, obviously, a very interesting report that we wanted to investigate, especially, in times when we are fiscally challenged across this country, especially, at the provincial level when the burden of social programs and health care is important. We need to understand what the implications are of cuts to certain programs or one program versus another and what the broader economic implications are.

When we did this study, or as you will see in the report, there are essentially three themes that we touch on.

The first is just what is the weight of public education in Ontario—what does it represent in terms of spending, and if you increase or decrease spending in this area, what does it contribute or take away from the economy? I will talk a little bit about that.

We also, as a second piece, looked carefully at what are the implications or can we, in a sense, reduce or increase spending without affecting educational outcomes, especially, with respect to the K-12, that is, to the kindergarten to grade 12 group. We looked very carefully at the evidence out there. We built empirical models that really look at the causality around spending on education and the impacts on high school graduation, specifically. We looked at the literature, and we tried to establish a very clear, causal link between these pieces, and, essentially, what we find is that it does have an impact, and it does have an impact or tends to have a bigger impact on the groups that are more susceptible or less well off. That is an important piece.

I will talk very quickly about the size of the economic contribution of the public education system. If we think about Ontario's total government spending, about 18% of it is in public education. That represents, essentially, $29 billion a year that the government spends, and it has huge ramifications in terms of the support it generates in economic activity, in employment across this province. In fact, that represents about 3.2% of GDP. GDP, by the way—sometimes people forget—is just income. GDP is income.

It represents 3.2% of GDP in this province and it supports 290,000 jobs when we consider the full repercussions across not just the educational sector, but across the broader economy.

If we increase or decrease spending in public education—so we took a look at a 1% increase or decrease, and at this level the impacts are pretty much symmetrical—what we find is that we have a multiplier of about 1.3. For every dollar that you add to public education, you add about 1.3 to the economy. What is important around that is, of course, that governments take a fair portion of anything generated in the economy, as you all know. A 1% increase represents about $290 million, but it also represents a fiscal, how shall I say, a fiscal comeback to the government that is about $54 million at the federal level and $36 million at the provincial level. You do spend more, but you get a portion of that back, and, conversely, if you take away, you lose a portion of that income as well. Most of the focus of the study, however, is on something that we have not done in a fair bit and that is look at the broader social impacts of cuts to or increases in spending in education. This is essentially how the analysis works. We are first trying to establish what the private benefits are. We know that if we increase public spending on education, we can get better outcomes in terms of high school graduation, and we know that if we get better outcomes on high school graduation—in fact, we did another empirical analysis looking at what the causal effect is considering and accounting for other factors of having a high school diploma versus not and what that means in terms of your income. What we found is essentially you are seeing income up about 26% for high school completes versus high school dropouts. That lends to the private benefits that you see there. Of course, the private benefits mean higher income across the province, and it does also mean that you will have higher tax revenues over on this end in terms of the fiscal benefit.

When we start thinking about higher income, we know that this has repercussions in terms of the social benefits.

We looked very specifically at three components, which are what are the impacts of having higher high school graduation rates on not just poverty reduction, but essentially, on social programs, on health care and on crime reduction?

Those are the three pieces that I am going to focus on. Of course, if you are able to have better outcomes in those areas, you also have fiscal benefits that show up here in terms of cost savings on the health, social insurance and on the criminal justice system. The scenarios—well, I have got to say I was surprised to see this, but high school graduation rates in Ontario have come up in just a few years, just 14 years, I guess, from 68% in 2004 to 86.3% in 2017.

We have seen an 18 percentage point increase in high school graduation rates in just a 13-year period. What we are looking for in terms of the scenarios that we built is something that I think is very achievable, and it is essentially to bring the current level of high school graduation rates, which are at 86.3% to 90%—90% being what we see in the top performing province, which is Nova Scotia.

We compare that, of course, to a scenario where we keep high school graduation rates as they are today, and we also looked at a scenario where if we disinvest, we would have essentially a lower high school graduation rate. Those are the scenarios. What does it all mean? How does it look?

Let me say that the first piece is around the social assistance piece. We used some very detailed data that we can get around individuals that we aggregate, of course, into our data sets, and that allows us to compare incomes, to labour market statistics, to other socio-economic factors that those individuals are living in. We can essentially build models that control for pretty much all of those socio-economic factors, but this also allows us to isolate the impact of if a person has a high school graduation versus if a person does not and compare those two pieces.

What we found essentially is that with respect to high school, those that did not complete schooling tend to use the social safety net at a rate of 11.6% versus high school completes or high school graduates, which use those social safety nets at 8.5%. We can just take a look at what that difference means in the first year where you have a graduation rate that is higher. There are so many people that come into the workforce or graduate from high school, and that stock of people that first year is worth about $5.1 million to the Ontario government in terms of cost savings. In the next year, of course, you have more graduates that come in, and then, the next year, you have more and so forth.

We looked over essentially a 20-year period here and how those costs build. On an annual basis, by the time you get to the end, you are essentially looking at cost savings that are over $100 million a year to the government with the cumulative impact overall of that period. One thing I did not mention earlier but must absolutely mention is that we did not assess the potential knock-on effects because, as you get more graduates from high school, you are getting a portion of those people that are also going to continue into bachelor degree programs, colleges and universities, so we did not consider the potential impacts of those further knock-on effects. This is conservative in a sense; it is only looking at high school graduates versus dropouts.

On the health care side: similar analysis. Again, we find a significant difference. In the first year, we know that high school grads tend to use health services less. In fact, about high school dropouts tend to use health care services 71% higher than grads. That is worth $5.1 million in the first year. It starts, and it grows as the stock of high school graduates grows over time. Sorry, I have got the wrong number. It is $5.1 for the social programs and $6.3 million in the first year for health care, and that grows cumulatively over time.

Last is the criminal justice system. Economists, the way they analyze everything is the cost of crime versus—so if you have a higher income, a higher salary, the cost of crime is greater, and you tend not to embark in that or the cost of getting caught in crime. We—again, there is not as much data or evidence on this for Canada—looked at studies that were done in the U.S. around higher incomes and the effect on criminal rates or rates of crime, and we adjusted, of course, for Canada's market where crime rates are much, much lower than in the U.S. Nonetheless, we do get an impact here that you can see, which is essentially $4.9 million in savings in the first year and which grows cumulatively over time. In summary, here is what you are seeing: $5.1 in social assistance, growing over time, and, if we sum all of that up over the 20-year period, we are talking about $1.1 billion there; $1.4 billion in health care; and another billion in criminal justice, so $3.5 billion from the benefits of getting our high school graduation rates from 86% to 90%.

It is really nothing in comparison to where we have come over the last 13 years. If you want to look at it that way of increasing your investments in education versus decreasing your investments in education, the cost per student is about $3,128. We are very precise in economics. We will give you the details. If I were a scientist, I would have to round out to significant digits, which would probably be 3.1, but there you go. Just some final thoughts around what we talked about. Essentially, public education, a big sector, of course, in the province supports lots of jobs and, of course, as you cut or increase spending in this segment, you get these kind of very well-known direct impacts on the economy, plus the supply chain impacts. We know there is a multiplier impact that is about 1.3 on the economy.

More importantly are the social benefits that we need to consider when we think about what we are investing in when we invest in public education. On that note, I think we are going to be introducing the panel. Thank you.

KE: Thank you Pedro. Our next panelist is an English teacher from Durham, who grew up in Pickering, Ontario where he attended elementary and high school.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trent University and a Master's from Queen's University.

He returned to the Durham area to teach English at Henry Street High School and then at Exeter High School. Harvey served as the local OSSTF/FEESO District 13 Durham Chief Negotiator and President before his election to the Provincial Executive in 2007 as an executive officer. In 2011 he was elected as a provincial vice-president and then as President in 2017.

He believes strongly in evidence-informed practice in education and evidence-based decision-making in public policy—and having launched this report, that makes sense. He is a vocal advocate for a strong publicly funded education system with inclusive, full-service schools that offer robust and accessible supports for all students. An accomplished labour negotiator, he is also a coalition builder who has forged strong alliances within the labour movement at the provincial, national and international levels. He is often sought out by the media as an articulate and authoritative voice on education issues in Ontario.

Please, welcome the President of the OSSTF, Harvey Bischof. Our moderator—if I read his whole bio—we would be here for weeks. He anchors BNN Bloomberg's morning program, The Open, which airs between 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on weekdays. Jon Erlichman is also a correspondent and fill-in anchor for CTV National News, as well as a fill-in anchor for Bloomberg's global program Bloomberg Markets and a contributor to CTV's Your Morning. Additionally, he hosts Sidelines on BNN Bloomberg and CTV.

He can be heard on iHeartRadio's BNN Bloomberg Radio and Montreal's No. 1 morning show, The Andrew Carter Morning Show, as well as Newstalk's 1010 Moore in the Morning. He has a background as a scoop-oriented reporter, an accomplished interviewer of top global CEOs and a digital innovator. He has helped BNN break multiple stories for BNN Bloomberg and CTV. In February of 2017, he was the first to report exclusive details of the planned meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and leading women executives at the White House. He also authored an in-depth piece on the fast growing artificial intelligence industry, called "Better than humans: Vanguards of the AI arms race." Erlichman previously served as a correspondent for ABC News in Los Angeles.

Beginning in September 2014, he covered the high-profile stories for the network, such as the cyber-attack at Sony Pictures, Harrison Ford's plane crash, and the Ebola crisis in Dallas. He spent more than six years working for Bloomberg Television.

He has written columns and articles for Fortune Magazine and so many other magazines. Beyond his traditional news experience, he is interested in and passionate about digital media. He served as a news advisor to Disney-owned Maker Studios, helping to launch partnerships with ABC News. He is based in Toronto.

He lives with his two daughters and his wife, who is an actor and entrepreneur, Caroline Lesley. Please, welcome the senior anchor for BNN Bloomberg and correspondent and anchor for CTV National News, Jon Erlichman.

Mr. Pedro Antunes and Mr. Harvey Bischof in Conversation with Mr. Jon Erlichman

JE: Thanks a lot. Good afternoon everybody, and good afternoon to you guys. Pedro, that was insightful.

It was great. As Kent alluded to, I work a lot with numbers. We do a lot of interviews with business leaders. I do a lot of interviews with economists—too many interviews with economists, I think, sometimes.

This has been such a big story that my job is to ask questions and to speak with a lot of teachers as well.

Before we launch in, do you remember something about high school, something that sits with you today?

PA: Absolutely.

JE: What is it?

PA: It is probably outside of the classroom itself, but more around the soccer teams and all that sports stuff that we used to—

JE: It is funny he says that because, as I have spoken to high school teachers for the last few weeks, so many of them have said, on the issue of education and on the issue of graduation, yes, they are working with students to make sure that they are up to speed in math, that they are up to speed in English, but the things that are most important to a lot of the teachers include where that person is in their journey, in their life.

How are their relationships with the other students, with their friends? That is what I think a lot about with high school is the friendships that I formed. I think that feeds into what you were trying to get at with the social issues, because school is a place where you go to learn about life, I would assume. Can I take that away from the numbers you were showing us today?

PA: Oh, absolutely. I think one of the things that I did not mention, which we have in the report, is the increase in social engagement, civic engagement from people that have a higher educational attainment.

JE: Obviously, a timely report. What prompted putting this report out now?

PA: There was a request for us to look into this issue from OSSTF, so we started on the research in partnership with them. This is a question, of course, for the Conference Board and that this is primary and important for us. When I was introduced, we talked about looking at the fiscal situation for Canada. This is something that we have been doing for a long, long time. It is part and parcel of our sustainability in the long term. How we can grow revenues is one part of the equation, looking at how we can be fiscally sustainable over the long term because of the big challenge of an aging demography and the pressures on health care, et cetera. We also need to be very aware of what the full costs of either investing or cutting in certain areas in public services are. This is really an important piece for us to do, and we were really pleased to kind of dig into the numbers.

PA: What was your reaction, Harvey, just seeing those numbers now?

HB: I guess they more than reinforce, or they gave us some empirical data to support. I think educators, support staff, teachers, students, parents have a kind of intuitive sense of the value of education and have an intuitive sense of the value of investment, but now we can draw the lines to that empirical data and to the figures that if you are not part of those cohorts of students and parents and so forth, why should you care about investment in education? Now, we have a very clear answer.

You should care because of the increased economic activity, so, if you are engaged in business in Ontario, if you are involved in the economy, which the vast majority of people are, obviously, and if you want to see improvements in health outcomes and other social outcomes. Fewer criminals obviously means fewer victims of crime. These are all social goods, and we can now draw a solid line to those things.

JE: I do not want to get too far into the weeds of how the economics comes together, but how do you quantify that the health cost of someone who graduates high school is going to be lower than someone who does not?

PA: That piece is very much income-based. We know that cohorts or households that have higher incomes tend to have better health outcomes and are less costly on the system. We looked very, very carefully at the data linking, as I mentioned, the causal factors and controlling for other factors between high school graduation and incompletion. This is what allows us to say, first of all, that there is a significant increase. By the way, it is a 26% increase for a high school grad in income versus non-graduate. If we go on to university or college, as I said, those increments get even higher. It is very important, obviously, in the knowledge economy. Just looking at the difference between high school grads and dropouts, that 26% increase, we know that there are repercussions on the cost of health care, just because you are at a higher income quantile. We looked very carefully, as well, on that piece adjusting for, I mean, obviously we need to adjust for a number of other factors that different cohorts would have on health care, but we did take into consideration as many factors as we could from that very deep database.

JE: Staying with the numbers—and Harvey I will come back to you, because you fielded this question a lot recently—people will say let us look at the fiscal picture in this province, and they will say that you could make a case for a lot of different parts of the economy that need money. When it comes to that issue that you have had to address, how do you feel about the fact that while this data supports the idea of investing in education, that as a province, there are some who would like to see a lot more fiscal prudence going forward?

HB: I will never argue against the idea of governments being fiscally responsible. These things do not fall into absolutes. They are about choices and decisions that you make. If you are going to spend money, do you want to forego $3 billion on a cancelled cap and trade program, for example, or risk $1 billion on a potential beer store lawsuit or $150 million on a cancelled hydro contract because you have interfered politically on a board, or do you want to put your money where there is an economic multiplier effect and there are additional social goods that come out of that? I think when you are making choices, if you can turn that dollar into a $1.30 by investing it in education and have the improvements in health and civic engagement and all of the things that come out of that, then the choices start to become a little more obvious to me at least.

JE: Pedro, let us go a little deeper into the numbers that you shared earlier. When we talk about the expenditure, specifically in public education, you were saying I think about 18%, so $29 billion. Just seeing that number alone does not tell me too much in terms of the context of what it is like as an expenditure for the nation or the provinces. Is that the kind of number that is normal when you are looking at a whole budget in a fiscal picture?

PA: I think the challenge for provincial governments, in general, is if you take the piece that is education, health care and social programs, you are eating up pretty much the entire budget, with health care eating up another 39%, and 11% on social programs. You are starting to eat up a big piece of the pie.

Of course, in Ontario and many other provinces, we are running deficits, so there are challenges with respect to that. The $29 billion is what it is. As I mentioned, it represents, in terms of the labour component, it is about 4.5% with the supply chain effects of total employment in the province. It is about 3.5%, if I am not mistaken, on the GDP side. It gives you a sense of how big that number is relative to the economy.

JE: If we think about some of the headlines we have seen recently—Harvey, just back to you, on the education issue—you start hearing about things like larger class sizes. That has probably been one of the more common that we have heard. If Pedro's analysis, the Conference Board's analysis, shows that at the end of the day, lower graduation rates leads to higher costs overall. Is there anything you have seen with larger class sizes and how that impacts things like graduation rates?

HB: Yes, I think the evidence is pretty clear in terms of the negative effect when you increase class sizes on graduation rates and on student achievement rates.

The high-quality studies that have been done have pointed to that for some time. Previous evidence was mixed, but, as the studies improve in quality, we start to see that that line is very clearly drawn. We also see that, maybe even more directly related to the study, increases in education spending from 2003–2019 have resulted in this 18.5% of improvement in the graduation rate. To paint a really stark picture, if the government goes forward with the intended cuts, so moving from average funding for a class of size of 22:1 to 28:1, we are talking about an almost 20% reduction in what is called the pupil foundation grant, one of the most important grants in education. That would take us back to 2004, 2005 levels for the pupil foundation grant. At that time, the graduation rate from high school was 71%, 15% lower than it is currently.

Take a look at Pedro's study and the knock-on effects of that lower graduation rate, what that would cost us in health care and social welfare costs and so forth. I think, as I say, the picture becomes pretty stark.

JE: Just looking at your analysis, it almost feels like you cannot just look at an education expenditure. Everything seems to bleed into everything else at the end of the day.

PA: I think, unfortunately, that is how complex the economy and society is.

JE: Was this challenging to do just based on some of the analysis? You crunched the numbers on a lot of stuff.

PA: I would say that we crunched numbers on three things, plus the civic engagement piece, which we did not quantify. There are things that we did not talk about. For example, I mentioned and alluded to it that if you do see more and more the stock of high school graduates growing, you will also see, eventually, some of those folks getting into higher levels of education like college and university. There are knock-on income effects that are much greater than the differential between just high school grads versus non–high school grads.

I think there is more to be done. As in economics, you can do as much as you can with the budget and time that you have, but certainly this is an area where we need to continue to deepen our understanding and continue to do research, for sure.

JE: Kent was alluding a little to this earlier, but if we think about the labour force and the jobs that are out there, with respect to productivity, ultimately, if you have fewer people graduating from high school, that is going to impact your people who are available to hire.

PA: We are currently benefiting from a very good labour market in this country. If you look at where the job growth has been, and I keep saying this, certainly there are some very, very good-quality jobs. When we think about the information technology sector, when we think about where the biggest growth has been in the last little while, it has been in other professional scientific technical services jobs. It is a service economy. It is a knowledge economy. It is an economy where if you do not have a high school diploma, you are not going to do very well at all. This is the reality of a high-income developed economy. Whether we are doing so well on productivity, that is a whole other question, but it is really a much deeper issue to look at, but it is clear. It is a knowledge economy. You need an education.

JE: I am glad you talk about that because, when it comes to technology, which has factored into this conversation around educational budgets, and the fact that, in theory, kids and students can take online courses, one thing I have heard in terms of some of the feedback from some of the teachers that ultimately have to implement that is what if you do not have a computer at home and you need to now do online courses not at home, but at the school library, and you are then basically hoping that those library hours will fit with your schedule? What would you say about that, about how, today, there is theoretically a lot you can do online as a student versus what actually happens in reality?

HB: Online courses have a value for a certain type of kid and under certain circumstances. You are in a remote, rural area, and you cannot get access to a particular course; you are a particularly highly motivated student. Online courses are great for those kids.

We also know that the success rate in online courses is nowhere near as high as in face-to-face delivery, and we have significant evidence to demonstrate that.

We know that there is not a jurisdiction that we could find, certainly not in North America, and I do not know if it exists anywhere in the world that has a mandatory four-credit online requirement, which is what the current Ontario government is pointing towards. At current success rates, that will mean a significant loss in student achievement, a significantly reduced number of high school graduates. That will have the impacts that Pedro talked about. Ultimately, the idea of forcing online learning, four credits on every student in Ontario, in this time, is flat our discriminatory. There are kids who cannot afford access to the technology they need. There are kids who live in places where there is not broadband. Those are issues that need to be resolved long before we move. A year from now, the government is proposing mandatory four online credits.

JE: We are talking a lot about secondary education here.

I have got kids in elementary school. When you are trying to do the math, the building blocks are going to start at the younger age, I would assume, before we start talking about getting to the point where you are either graduating from high school or not graduating from high school as well.

PA: I think at all levels this is important. We need to build the good foundations early on. No, I think this is absolutely true.

JE: You mentioned when it comes to the country right now, there have been some pretty good economic numbers, a pretty good job market, but there is uncertainty going forward. I think even in your own projections, you are looking at a slowing economy going forward.

PA: This goes to part of that challenge where it is a dual-edged sword. When it comes to the fiscal situation, which is a lot about what this research is focused on, we have a situation where we have an aging demography, and that means that we are slowing the amount of labour and the number of people into the workforce, which slows our economic growth, in general. At the same time, these folks are going into their higher-cost years in terms of health care spending. It is a dual-edged sword that Canada is challenged with, and we need to better understand those challenges. You are absolutely right in terms of the economy, and, remember, I said GDP is just income, and the government takes its share of income. If that is slowing, your government revenues are slowing, and your health care costs are growing more strongly than that. We need to look at these challenges I think holistically. There are a whole lot of things that government can do.

We are talking about immigration; we are talking about delivering health care more effectively; and we are talking about what we can do around health care. This is why we wanted to do this study.

JE: It is helpful to have a framework built around numbers. At the end of the day, though, a lot of people have a lot of things to say about what is happening right now. How much do you, personally, feel is based on the individual's own experience in school?

HB: In our experience, everybody is an education expert, because everybody went through school. Certainly, that is what we hear. What we want to contribute to, though, is an empirically founded discussion around education. We can have ideological differences about what outcomes we are focused on, but if we do not have this kind of evidence to support what we are doing, we are aiming our rifle without sights. We do not know if we are going to hit the target or not, so we want to promote that effort to say, "Look, if what you want is a higher graduation rate, if what you want is greater equity within a society that gets built—as is very clearly demonstrated in the study—through investments and education, if these things are important to you, how do you achieve that?" This study gives us some solid grounding to say you achieve it through these directions and not others.

JE: Thank you for those who wrote a question. I have a couple here, so I do want to get them into the conversation. I am just going to start with one about—we alluded earlier to the fact that there is fiscal responsibility when it comes to running the province. This one says this report does not talk about the fact that there are only so many resources. To what degree has that been considered in the preparation?

PA: This is not something that was an objective of the research of this piece. Here, we are simply saying these are the implications of a certain percentage amount of cut or increase associated with better outcomes on high school graduation rates. No, we did not look at this and do a projection and take a look at what would be the implications on the fiscal situation. I think that is a deeper question. When we look at that, we are looking at budgets, and we are trying to get a sense of, with all the measures put in place, what that means for the fiscal situation. We can have someone say and comment on that. This is a standalone piece involving looking in isolation at if you change these dropouts, just these dropouts, what the implications are.

JE: To be clear, when we are talking about this investment in education, there is a lot that goes into that. It seems like the simplified version of the story is to look at what a teacher is paid, but that is really only part of the story of what education spending entails. Is that fair to say?

HB: Absolutely it is. In fact, what we have been focused on is programming decisions around things like class size, around the fact that if we ultimately end up with this 28:1 funding ratio, four years from now, we are going to lose 30,000 class choices for students in the Ontario education system on an annual basis, 30,000 fewer options to take a course that is going lead a student to their chosen future and into the economy.

This is about much more than the remuneration for education workers. This is about program decisions that are going to benefit students.

JE: Harvey, I am glad you got into that because it actually feeds into another question we got from the audience where that very issue was mentioned. This audience member is saying bigger class sizes are bad, but schools cancelling options in specialized classes like physics programming, et cetera, is also frightening. This audience member wanted to get your comment on the likely economic consequences of that. I guess we are trying to figure out right now that roadmap ahead. Is that something that you can work into the analysis?

PA: I am afraid we are not experts on the delivery piece of education. I think there is probably much more; although, even if the greater population tends to thinks they are all experts, I will shun away from that and say there are people out here and elsewhere that are much more cognizant of the specific programs and how that actually affects educational outcomes. We are here to take a broad perspective. What is the data showing us in terms of the general outcomes of when you change these leavers? How does it affect the aggregate results in terms of how many folks are graduating out of high school and what the implications are of that at a very macro level? That is a question that is a little too tough for me.

JE: I have another question here which asks, How do we get parents to see that change to investments in classroom learning impacts future prospects of students?

I am sure this is an issue that a lot of people have been talking about. They have been debating. Maybe you have been to a Sunday dinner with family members, some of whom might be teachers; others have a different view. A lot of people are having interesting conversations around this, but what would you say to that?

HB: I would say we are doing everything we can to have an effect on the kind of public discussion about education and the value of investments. In it, I would include things like today's event, and we will be disseminating as widely as we possibly can the Conference Board report, because it points in those directions.

We are engaged as much as we possibly can be in the public discussion in all kinds of ways, through media, through face-to-face conversations, and we hope that understanding is going to be of interest amongst a broader segment of the public.

PA: We focused a lot on the fiscal benefits, et cetera, but one thing I mentioned early on is that private benefit, so in terms of the 26% for high school graduation, if you get a college degree, your income is now about 70% above a high school dropout; if you get a bachelor's degree, on average, you are114% above a non-complete in high school. These are the private benefits to those individuals earning or attaining a higher level of education.

JE: You said yourself you seemed a little surprised, at actually, the graduation levels as they currently stand.

PA: I was just surprised at how quickly they came up: 18 percentage points. It is more than 18%. It is just percentage points from 68% to 86.3% of students now graduating from high school. Ultimately, we need that, I think, to as close to 100% as possible. I think there is still work to be done there, but it has been a very important change in just 13 years.

JE: This has been a dialogue largely around highlighting the value that comes from investment in education.

It comes at a time where we are looking at the books and asking the question, on issues like fiscal responsibility, where you might cut. This other question I have here cites recent news stories suggesting Ontario has a revenue problem, and are we just accepting that cuts are the only way to balance the books, basically?

What would you say about that?

PA: To stay as independent as possible, I think governments are the voice of people and governments need to make the choices that I think are ultimately the best for their constituencies. I would just give you an example, however, of two different provinces that went in two different directions. This was back in the good years, in 2006, 2007, 2008, when we had some good economic growth. Ontario chose not to increase taxes when federal GST, for example, was coming down. Quebec did choose to increase taxes. They put in a health levy. When we compare, now, Ontario and Quebec, Quebec was a mess not that long ago in terms of its fiscal situation, much higher debt level. Quebec has resolved that situation. Once you get to a position where you are in a surplus, it is kind of a virtuous cycle rather than a vicious cycle. Right now, Ontario is still facing a bit of a vicious cycle. Ontario needs to make choices around what they want to do going forward. Certainly, there is a fiscal challenge there, and I think the province needs to consider all of the repercussions, including the repercussions that we tried to understand better in this research.

HB: It is important to understand the context we are in as well. Ontario has the lowest per capita spending on programs of any jurisdiction of any province in Canada. That means, for some reason, you go back to the Don Drummond report and he, himself, pointed out that Ontario was neither a high-tax nor a high-spend jurisdiction—not exactly a noted left-winger, Mr. Drummond. As I said, Ontarians need to make decisions. One of those decisions has to be do we want to compete on the basis of being the cheapest jurisdiction, or do we want to be the highest-skilled, most educated, most productive jurisdiction?

PA: People did not like my comments.

JE: Well, you are an economist. We are almost out of time, but you alluded to the fact that you are planning to use this information, this data, as part of what we are going to be hearing from you. Can you just elaborate on what you are going to be doing over the next few weeks when it comes to that?

HB: We are in the process, as we speak, of disseminating the report to actually tens of thousands of people who have identified themselves as supporters of public education and investment in education. We will be engaging with the media through paid and earned media in order to disseminate the findings of the report.

We will hope that more of the debate happens on the basis of evidence-informed approaches than we sometimes find right now.

JE: One more for the road. Thanks, Kent. This question says there is data suggesting that, in the coming years, there will be an influx of skilled workers in the labour sector in order to reconcile the aging population.

You did talk a little bit about the population issue earlier. What are the implications, economically, if there are not enough students who select this career path?

PA: Sorry, I am not quite sure about this influx of skilled workers. I would suggest there is research that we are doing on immigration. In fact, we have a fair bit of research on immigration that talks about the labour force challenges. What we have in Canada is a situation where, with the baby boom cohort, which is retiring, we are going to see an exodus of about 11 million people out of the workforce. When you look at the school leavers coming into the workforce, that is, in fact, 9.5 million people. We are actually short in the coming years of replacing just the workers from the school dropouts. Immigration is a big part of filling that gap. I think perhaps that is what we are talking about, because we have seen, essentially, the federal government and provincial governments look to immigration to start to fill that gap. The issues around skilled migrants, skilled workers and those streams, those are obviously very important in terms of filling the requirements of a workforce.

JE: Parents might move here and be skilled workers, but they have children as well.

PA: Absolutely. In fact, immigrants come in, in that 30-something cohort, which is also a cohort that tends to have children and need…

HB: I think the Chamber of Commerce would agree with me on this, if perhaps nothing else, that they are looking for workers in skilled trades, for example.

If we do not get them through graduation, through grade 12 successfully, they do not have even the option of moving to that next step of apprenticeship in a skilled trade. That is a growing and a deep need in Ontario, and reducing the high school graduation rate will take us in the opposite direction of where we need to go.

JE: It is a conversation, no doubt, that will continue.

Our thanks to both Harvey and Pedro for their time today.

KE: Ladies and gentlemen, I want to welcome the Chief Advocate for Aurora Strategy, Marcel Wieder, to come up here.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Marcel Wieder, President and Chief Advocate, Aurora Strategy Group, Inc.

Thank you, Kent. It is a great pleasure to be here.

On behalf of the Aurora Strategy Group, we are pleased to sponsor today's Empire luncheon. At Aurora, our focus is getting your message delivered. Events like this are excellent opportunities to do that.

On behalf of the Empire Club, I would like to thank Pedro Antunes, Chief Economist of the Conference Board of Canada, Harvey Bischof, the President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, for sharing their keen insights on this important study.

I also want to extend a special thanks to Jon Erlichman for hosting and moderating this discussion.

As we get ready to leave, I want to leave one last thought with you. Public education has a bigger impact on the Ontario economy than most people think. According to the Ontario government report Driving Prosperity, the future of the automotive sector, the auto industry, accounted for 2.4% of Ontario's GDP and employed 100,000 people.

Public education, however, has a 3.2% impact on Ontario's GDP, making it 33% greater than the auto sector.

With over 290,000 people employed in the education sector, it is almost three times as large as the auto industry.

Education workers are found in every corner of this province, compared to certain concentrations for autoworkers.

Education plays an important role in Ontario, not only for ensuring that we have a well-trained workforce, but also as an economic driver.

In a competitive global market, we need to have students who will continue the economic success of this province.

This report demonstrates the importance of investment in education, which saves money for governments and produces economic benefits that are greater than the original investment.

For those who are watching live stream, if you want to get a copy of this report, it is available at betterschoolsstrongereconomy.ca, so, please, visit the website, and you can download the full report there. Thank you and have a good day.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Today is our 38th event at the Empire Club of Canada. We have one more event next week, and that will be with the federal minister of health. That is going to be a fantastic event. For those of you who have not bought tickets yet, it is on Monday.

A couple of points. Pedro, you mentioned that you wanted an economist. We have the Governor of the Bank of Canada coming in December for Mike's season. I guess you just volunteered to buy the first table.

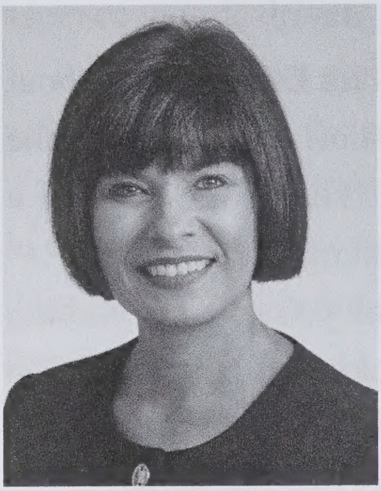
We really appreciate that. Another point is that you talked about immigration.

For the first event this season, Victor Dodig spoke about how if we do not increase immigration exponentially, the economy is going to be in trouble. That is the CEO of a major bank, so you guys have something in common.

You should give him a call. Thank you guys for coming today. It has been a great event looking at how education and the economy are tied. I think this is an important topic, and it will continue.

It is going to continue in the media. We have launched this global report today, and we are very pleased that you guys came to the Empire Club of Canada to do this.

Meeting adjourned. Thank you.



THE HONOURABLE GINETTE PETITPAS TAYLOR

CANADA'S MINISTER OF HEALTH

WITH: FROM HOSPITAL TO HOME: PREPARING OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FOR AN AGING CANADA

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

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June 24, 2019

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. From the Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today, we present the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Canada's Minister of Health, who will be presenting the speech "Preparing Our Health Care System for an Aging Canada."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Canada's Minister of Health

Guests:

Ms. Joe Blomeley, Executive Vice President, Individual and Public Sector, Green Shield Canada

Dr. Shurjeel Choudhri, Head, Scientific and Medical Affairs, Bayer Inc.

Mr. Noble Chummar, Partner, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Josh Cooper, President and Chief Executive Officer, Baycrest Foundation

Mr. Pierre Cyr, Vice President, Public Affairs, FleishmanHillard HighRoad Ottawa; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Jon Erlichman, Senior Anchor, BNN Bloomberg; Correspondent/Anchor, CTV National News

Ms. Karen Heim, Vice President, Patient Access and Established Brands, AstraZeneca Canada Inc.

Mr. Derrick Rozdeba, Vice President, Communications and Public & Government Affairs, Bayer Inc.

Ms. Sue VanderBent, Chief Executive Officer, Home Care Ontario; Director, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Gamze Yüceland, General Manager, Takeda Canada

This is the second Empire Club health care event we have had this season. We had a fantastic event earlier in the year about national pharmacare, which looked at the pros and cons of that. At that event, we had a pollster named Nik Nanos, explaining how important health care is to Canadians. With the federal election just a few short months away, it is important to take note that health care still takes priority over many prominent issues in the minds of Canadians.

Yes, there are issues that you hear more of, such as climate change that capture the attention of the media, but just because it is in the news does not mean that is what Canadians are driven by. Just a few weeks ago, to underscore this, the Ipsos Reid poll said that 50% of Canadians rank health care in their top three issues that should be focused on well ahead of other issues. Climate change got 33%; taxes got 33%; poverty got 23%; education 22%; and immigration got 20%. One in five Canadians rank health care as their number one priority. Because health care is that important to Canadians, we made sure that we got the federal minister here at the Empire Club of Canada prior to the next general election. One of the greatest health care priorities facing our country is the need to respond to the changing social norms regarding seniors' expectation to live and age independently in their own homes. We know that our seniors play an invaluable role in their own families and contribute significantly to the social fabric of their communities.

Canada's growing active senior population is therefore a testament to a progressive health care system and our success as a society. While seniors of the future are predicted to be among the healthiest in history, it is also known that the likelihood of developing chronic conditions such as dementia, diabetes, lung and heart disease, increases with age and can seriously compromise the prospect of future independence. Our hospitals play an important role in supporting people with acute issues, but we know that a strong home care system will be the longer term solution to broader health care reform. Thank you, Minister, for coming to discuss how health care must retool to respond to the needs of our senior population, so they can remain healthy and happy in the home and community setting.

Before we get started, I am going to introduce our speaker today. There is going to be a Q&A just after the speech.

All of you can think of your questions. We will come to you with a microphone. Today's speaker was elected in October 2015 as a Member of Parliament in the riding of Moncton–Riverview–Dieppe. She serves as the chair of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and is a Member of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, and of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

She also served as the deputy government whip from December 2015 to January 2017. In January 2017, she was named Parliamentary Secretary to the minister of finance.

She has spent her entire life advocating for a fair and just society for all. She was the former chair of the New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women and a member of the Coalition for Pay Equity. She has volunteered with several community organizations, both provincially and locally, including the Coalition Against Abuse in Relationships and the Canadian Mental Health Association's Suicide Prevention Committee in Moncton.

She has served on the City of Moncton's Public Safety Advisory Committee, which was commissioned by Moncton city council in 1996 to proactively influence the community through crime prevention promotion and to help council respond to problematic issues as they arise.

She grew up in Dieppe, New Brunswick, and graduated from l'Université de Moncton with a Bachelor's degree in social work.

Please, welcome Canada's Minister of Health, the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor.

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor

Good afternoon, everyone. Bonjour à tous. It is really an honour and a privilege for me to be here with all of you today. Before I begin, I would also like to acknowledge that the land in which we gather is the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit. Thank you for the warm introduction. I also want to thank the Empire Club for inviting me to speak today about one of the greatest challenges and opportunities that our country faces. Finally, I would also like to thank each and every one of you for joining me here today. I am going to have to start perhaps with an apology. Coming from the east coast, we are always talking about the weather. I was hoping that I was going to see the sun here today, but I see that I have brought the rain along with me. All kidding aside, I have had a wonderful morning so far. I started off in Davenport and had a roundtable on the issue of healthcare.

Then, from there, had an announcement on public awareness and prevention regarding cannabis.

We have had some good announcements. Today, I am very pleased this afternoon to be here with all of you.

In 2017, Canada marked a major milestone. It was a milestone that says a lot about us as Canadians, who we were, who we are, and who we will be. I am not talking about Canada 150. I am not talking about the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, nor the Tragically Hip's last concert or even the Leafs finally making it to the playoffs. In 2017, our census revealed that for the first time ever in Canada's history, Canada has more seniors than children. In the two years since then, this gap has only widened and seniors are now the fastest growing group of people within our country. As a Maritimer, we feel this more acutely out east, but it is having an impact right across the country. When I visit every province and territory and meet with health ministers, I hear this day in and day out. On a side note, I really have to say that I hate it when folks talk about aging and oftentimes refer to it as a tsunami. A tsunami arrives only with a few minutes' warning.

Aging is a challenge that we know has been coming for quite some time. I know this comes as little surprise to many of you in this room. From the kitchen table to the boardroom table, no facet of Canadian society will be unaffected. I know that many of you are leading efforts to prepare for this, and your government is, too.

We are acting now to ensure that Canada is ready, so that all of our seniors can live life to the fullest. That is why we have created a new role in cabinet specifically for them, Canada's Minister for Seniors. We have also increased GIS payments, bolstered the Canada Pension Plan and lowered the eligibility age for Old Age Security back from 67 to 65, ensuring stability for nearly one million older Canadians.

These bold steps, along with many others, will make a difference in the lives of so many Canadian seniors. Yet, there is something that will be affected by our aging population more than anything else. That is our healthcare system.

Unsurprisingly, the older people get, the more need they have with respect to healthcare. Confronted by the demographic realities that I just mentioned, there is no question our healthcare system will come under strain. That is why we are acting now.

We know that there is no one-size-fits-all solution; rather we must prepare for an aging Canada by fundamentally shifting the orientation of our healthcare system from hospital to home care. Let us put this into perspective.

This month actually marks the 100th anniversary of Canada's first Federal Health Department. This is the perfect moment at a brief glance back.

Our system has gone through three distinct eras, and we are about to enter the fourth. The first era government did little. For the first 50 years of Confederation, health was actually handled by the Department of Agriculture.

Yes, I said 'agriculture'. The second era began in the 20th century when the climate of social change finally spurred government to set up a dedicated health department in 1919.

Over the next 50 years, the federal government played an ever-expanding role in health care, gradually assuming greater responsibilities until the advent of universal public health care, first in Saskatchewan and later nationwide.

The passage of the Medical Care Act in 1966, followed by the Canada Health Act in 1984, marked the dawn of the third era in which government became a central player in healthcare. The past 50 years have seen government make major investments in acute care, like hospitals and other frontline services.

As our population ages, we are entering a new era, a fourth era. Since taking office in 2015, our government has begun transforming our health care system from one focused on acute care for the young population to one serving the long-term needs of older Canadians.

Now, I know full well that government does not have all the answers. That said, I think that we can certainly ask the right questions. That is why that we have launched, last year, our Healthy Seniors Pilot Project, a $75-million initiative based out of New Brunswick, to help us better understand the impact of aging and how we can support our seniors. The lessons learned will be implemented nationwide. I am truly excited to see these results.

Our work to transform the healthcare system begins with major commitments to home care. It is no surprise that Canadians want to stay home for as long as they can, be it for comfort, familiarity or dignity—to say nothing of the impact on physical and mental health. There are so many reasons why we want to age at home. Yet, with government focused on acute care over the past 50 years, there was little attention and even less investment in home care. Today, we see the results.

We have changed that. In Budget 2017, our government made the largest investment in home care in Canadian history, an unprecedented $6 billion. This represents a serious commitment towards the healthcare system that cares for Canadians right where they are at. It is being spent in four areas. Number one, scaling up home care models that are proven to work and connecting them more closely with the healthcare system, to increase support for caregivers and improve home care infrastructure, like digital connectivity and giving more people access to palliative care.

Over the past two years, we have reached agreements with every province and territory detailing how this money will be spent, ensuring that it goes where it will make the greatest difference in the lives of Canadians.

Six billion dollars is a big number. How does that money actually help Canadians? It is a personal support worker, perhaps, who used to come once a week, now caring for a senior every day. It is a patient's health information being collected at home and directly sent to be monitored by their doctor, meaning less time in hospitals. It is those ending the end of their lives, spending their final days in comfort with those they love. Home care is also the smart thing to do for our healthcare system. Beyond seniors, it benefits many Canadians with disabilities and also those living with chronic disease. It reduces the burden on hospitals and nursing homes, freeing up space for those who need it most. It keeps Canadians healthier, both physically and mentally.

Of course, seniors are not just the biggest users of our healthcare system; they also need the most prescription drugs. Some of you might have heard that we are doing something about that these past few days. Since coming into office, we have taken several bold, concrete steps to make medication more affordable. We have joined the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance which allows us to bulk purchase drugs. We have proposed significant changes to the rules that govern drug pricing, and we have announced the creation of the Canadian Drug Agency and committed $1 billion towards the high cost for drugs for rare diseases.

Finally, we are making progress towards the national pharmacare program. We recently received our pharmacare Advisory Council's final report, and we are excited to move forward. We will not rest until every Canadian and, especially, our seniors get the medications that they need.

We cannot talk about aging unless we talk about dementia as well. A Canadian is diagnosed with dementia every seven minutes in this country. We have over 400,000 seniors already living with dementia in Canada. I am pretty sure that everyone in this room knows someone who is affected by dementia—either a family member or a loved one.

I also know that dementia does not have to be scary, but it is. What could be more frightening or terrifying than losing our own memory or our mind? Yet, it does not have to be that way. Folks with dementia can live well at the heart of their communities. Our government is determined to make sure that happens. To advance our understanding of dementia, we have invested nearly $200 million in research over the past five years and supported a national research network. To ensure our work is informed by those who know it best, we have established the Ministerial Advisory Board on Dementia and hosted the first-ever National Dementia Conference in Ottawa last year. To unite all of our efforts, just last week, we launched Canada's first-ever national dementia strategy. I am proud to say that our Administerial Advisory Board consists of many wonderful Canadians from coast to coast to coast: Researchers, experts in the field.

But one thing that was very important to me was to make sure that we have people with lived experience in caregivers that were there. We have several of our Advisory Council members that are living with dementia and those that are also caring for them. They are the ones that informed us and told us what needed to be in that strategy.

That is why I am very, very proud of the work that has been done. The strategy sets out three bold objectives.

Preventing dementia; advancing therapies and finding a cure; and making a positive difference in the lives of Canadians with dementia and those who care for them.

Let us be honest: Over the years, governments—and I mean governments of all stripes—have put in place an array of national strategies. You may ask yourself what makes this one different.

It is because we are putting our money where our mouth is. In Budget 2019, we have invested $50 million to help implement this strategy, and this is the beginning.

While we work to ensure that Canadians are ready to face challenges of aging, we must also ensure that Canada itself is ready. If we are serious about seniors living at home longer, then we must make sure that our communities are age friendly and are set up in a way that helps seniors live safe, healthy and engaged lives. This work is well under way in over 1,200 communities across our country. Big cities like right here in Toronto and Calgary have age-friendly strategies which guide these efforts. Meanwhile, small cities or towns like Saanich, British Columbia have incorporated an age-friendly lens into all municipal departments. They plan on building 200 km of new sidewalks, complete with better ramps and crossings, so that seniors can stay active and healthy. As I come to the end of my remarks today, I want to touch upon the elements of healthcare that generally come last. That would be palliative care. Palliative care is both one of the most essential and most difficult parts of our healthcare system. It is literally a matter of life and death. I think we can all agree that everyone—and I mean everyone—should live out their final days in the comfort of their home and dignity in the setting of their choice and surrounded by their friends and loved ones. Yet, the reality is that not everyone in this country has access to palliative care.

That is why we have introduced our framework on palliative care in Canada last September. The point of the framework is to get everyone on the same page, giving government, stakeholders, caregivers and others a common reference point that helps us share ideas and best practices.

Let us not kid ourselves here. Palliative care can be scary. There are few things harder than confronting one's own mortality. We must and we must encourage all Canadians to do the same. Whenever I talk about seniors' care, I think of my dear friend, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, the Director-General of the World Health Organization. He likes to say, "When it comes to caring for our elderly, we all have a vested interest because one day we will be the ones who need it." That is why we are taking action today. We all know that Canadians are proud of their healthcare system. It is almost a cliché at this point as anyone who spent time in the United States. This is actually something that I have been reminded about while watching the Raptors game during the NBA finals when Conan O'Brien tweeted, "Win or lose, at least the Toronto Raptors know they have access to healthcare." One more thing I should add. I see that lots of businesses here in Toronto are offering Kawhi Leonard free food, a free apartment or even a free lifetime supply of ice cream, so I want to send him the same challenge. If he stays here, we will provide him with free healthcare. Back to the matter at hand. Just because we have a sturdy vessel does not mean that we do not face rough seas. There are storm clouds on the horizon—not a tsunami, but a squall, nonetheless. Can you tell I am a Maritimer here? That is why we are battening down the hatches, strengthening the hull and trimming the sails, so that our system can weather the storm and emerge stronger than ever. Once again, I want to take this opportunity for all of you for being here today. We all have a role to play in making sure that we prepare our healthcare for the needs of the 21st century.

Merci beaucoup tout le monde.

Questions & Answers

Q: Durhane Wong-Rieger, the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders. I really, really want to thank the minister. I am going to put a question to you, but not to take away from, I think, the amazing things that you as a minister have brought and certainly what this government has brought. I think everything you said today really are things that we can be very proud of and can truly applaud. First of all, I just want to thank you very much for all you have done.

I have never known, personally, anybody who is so personal, compassionate and supportive of the patient

community, so thank you. Your mention of Dr. Adhanom drives me to really ask—I just met Dr. Adhanom for the first time in May and he was with us on behalf of Rare Diseases and Rare Disease International. He has said before that no country can be said to actually be serving its citizens unless it actually serves those that are the most disadvantaged, and that includes those with rare diseases.

We are thrilled with the fact that there is, in effect, a drug program for rare diseases to support it, but we are really curious as to why in 2015 we presented a strategy for rare diseases to the parliament. You were there, and you spoke to it. We recognize that you cannot actually do drugs well, unless you have an overall strategy for it. We are really somewhat hopeful and somewhat puzzled why we have not actually implemented a strategy around rare diseases. I would just add very quickly again that we are truly grateful and excited about having the funding for drugs for rare diseases, but we are also very concerned that we take some real measures in terms of assuring that while we are trying to lower drug prices, we do not do it in such a way that we drive out innovative therapies; otherwise, we will not have any need for having a drug plan, because we will not have these therapies. Thank you very much.

GT: Thank you very much for your question and for your comments. Once again, when it comes to the area of rare diseases, we certainly know it is an area that has been long overdue that we pay special attention to it.

Yes, we have received the recommendations, and I am looking forward to moving forward with putting together a strategy to specifically deal with the area of rare diseases. In Budget 2019, we have certainly received some funding in two areas when it comes to putting together the National Pharmacare Program, but also when it comes to rare diseases. The Canadian Drug Agency is going to have a mandate of number one, putting together a formulary to make sure that we can address what is going to be covered for a National Pharmacare Program, but also, we are, number two, going to have to make sure that we work with provinces and territories to make sure that we have a strategy in place to specifically deal with rare diseases. I know just two weeks ago I was in the riding of Fundy Royal, and I did a roundtable on the topic of pharmacare. The roundtable really ended up being a topic on families that have loved ones that have children that have been diagnosed with a rare disease.

It is heart-wrenching to hear what families have to go through. We want to make sure that we get this right.

That is why I am looking forward within—hopefully, we will have a next mandate in order to do this work because all Canadians should have access to the medication that they need. And those also, from the rare disease community cannot be overlooked.

You have to be an important part of that conversation. I look forward to continuing this work as we move forward. Thank you.

Q: Minister, my name is Laura Tamblyn Watts. I am with the Canadian Association of Retired Persons.

Thank you for your comments today on seniors, in particular. I follow with great pleasure your work on social media and particularly the T-shirts that you have been wearing saying "Vaccines Cause Adults."

GT: It is kind of catchy, is it not?

Q: Minister, we cheer when you wear those shirts, and we cheer with the work that you have done providing leadership around vaccines. It is shocking to know that only about 3% of Canada's seniors, who you spoke so eloquently about, have appropriate adult vaccinations.

We know that you have been tackling the issue of pharmacare right on. I am curious if you could speak a little bit to how we could tackle better the critical need for adult vaccinations.

GT: Thank you so much for your question. Concerning my T-shirt, Dr. Gigi Osler, the president of the Canadian Medical Association, came to see me and she provided me with a gift. She wanted to know if I could accept it.

The first thing she said was, "It is under $25, Minister, so do not worry." It was this great T-shirt that says exactly that vaccines cause adults. We took a picture together, and we put it on social media. I put it on social media, but, to my shock, we had over 14,000 comments on this post alone. I can tell you, I am a politician, and I get an awful lot of comments on social media, but nothing like for "vaccines cause adults." I just could not believe it.

It certainly—we know that it is a discussion that is alive and well.

I have got to fast forward, and, actually, three weeks ago, I was at a cabinet meeting—not that we are supposed to discuss what happens in cabinet—and I just mentioned this conversation to the prime minister about all of these comments that I had. He said, "I want one of those T-shirts." I got him a T-shirt, and we took a picture as well.

It was the same response. Again, we have to recognize there is an awful lot of anti-vaxxers that are out there, a lot of bots and probably people that do not even exist, but certainly we know that we have to do more when it comes to increasing the vaccination rates in this country for seniors and Canadians.

That is why within the past few years in our budgets, as the Public Health Agency of Canada, we have received some money in order to increase our vaccination rates.

I think, to your point, we really have to have a targeted lens as to how can we increase our vaccination rates when it comes to seniors as well. That is an ongoing conversation that we must have and that we need to have because, if we want to increase our vaccination rates, a one-size-fits-all is not going to be helpful. We also recognize that data collection and making sure that when people live in one province but move to another province that we can keep track of these records.

I know when I speak to my public health officials, I ask what we can do to maximize the work that is being done here. There is a lot of work with respect to that, with respect to tracking, and with respect to having a specific lens on how to make sure that specific populations will be able to get their vaccine rates increased.

Again, if we look at Indigenous communities as well, we again have to make sure that we have a specific lens to make sure that we can get them where they are at. That is work that is underway, but, for myself, as your health minister, my goal is to really make sure that we can absolutely increase those rates because there are diseases that were a thing of the past, and we are seeing now they are emerging again. We certainly have to do all that we can in order to promote the best public health tool that we have at our disposal, which is vaccines. Thank you.

Q: Good afternoon, Minister. Thank you so much for your talk today. My name is Nancy Polsinelli and I represent the Region of Peel. We are very interested in your dementia strategy. We have five long-term care homes and our seniors population is well over 80% with residents with moderate to advanced stages of dementia. We have recently adopted the butterfly model of care. Not certain if you have heard about it. It really looks at emotional care and well-being of our seniors. Certainly, with dementia, we understand that they are feeling beings and not thinking beings.

Along with physical care and clinical care, there is a lot of emphasis put on the emotional well-being of our seniors. I would really love the opportunity to see how that care model can be integrated into the seniors strategy. What we are finding is not only is there a lot of interest across Ontario, certainly in Alberta, but there is a need to help our seniors, those that are suffering with dementia to help them a little differently than—and I apologize to some—the medication route.

Certainly, when we look at our incidence of resident-to-resident behaviours, when we look at resident-to-staff, there is an opportunity here to really build on the great work of the seniors strategy.

I would love the opportunity to not only talk to you about it, but maybe have you join us at one of our homes to see it.

GT: Thank you so much for that intervention. I absolutely agree with you. I think there is a role for the medical model, but there is also a role for differing models as well. I share openly that my 94-year-old mother lives with dementia, so I can tell you that putting together this National Dementia Strategy as your health minister was a priority, but it was also a personal priority of mine. I can remember very well when I had doubts that perhaps this was happening. Nine years ago, I was going to my mom's place for supper one evening, and I had called her just an hour before to say that I was going to see what she wanted—Swiss Chalet or St. Hubert's were the two restaurants of choice, were her preferences. She had given me her order. When I got home that evening with her, she looked at me and she said, "What are you doing here?" My dad had kind of given me a few hints that he thought mom was different. I was in denial. I will be very, very frank. Fast forward, we have provided much support for her. She stayed home for a period of time, but now she is in a special care home. I have made it a point when I am at the special care home to make sure that if there are any changes in her medication at all, I want to be made aware of it.

I can tell you, the response that I got from the nursing home was, "You cannot possibly want us to call you every time there is a change in the medication." I was like, "Yes, I want to know exactly what is being done." You are absolutely right. There are different models, but we can integrate those types of models. At the end of the day, I want to make sure that my mom and all seniors have the best care, the best quality of life that they have. Dementia does not have to be as scary as it is now, but we certainly have to work together in order to put in place a model that will meet their needs. I would be more than happy to have that conversation with you down the road to be able to share some thoughts and ideas on that. Thank you very much.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Noble Chummar, Partner, Cassels Brock and Blackwell LLP; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Thank you, Minister. Thank you for your great remarks. You have a huge responsibility as the minister responsible for something a lot of us care so deeply about, and a society that takes care of our elderly is the kind of Canada that we want to live in.

Good luck, and thank you for your remarks. Thank you for spending time with us at the Empire Club of Canada.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Please, stand on the stage for one minute, Noble. I want to present you with something. As you might know, as a club as old as the Empire Club—1903—we capture every remark, the good and the bad from 1903.

We have spent the last six or seven years, and we have all events on video. As you are a past president of the Empire Club, and your year was 2013–2014, we have just printed your Red Book.

We call it the 'Red Book'. As you can see it is a book that has every speech that happened during that year. I want to present it to you, Noble, for the work you did.

Congratulations, on your work. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, this is the 39th and final event since September of this season. I want to thank everyone who supported us through the year very much, and I want to wish you all a great summer.

We will be back in September with our new president, Michael Van Soelen, of Navigator, who will begin in September as the new president.

Thank you very much.